DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 274 208 FL 016 092

AUTHOR Brumfit, Christopher, Ed.; And Others
TITLE Second Language Learning: Research Problems and Perspectives. Papers from a Conference on Second Language Learning (Birmingham, England, February 24-26, 1984).
INSTITUTION Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, London (England).
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 118p.; For individual papers, see FL 016 093-099.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Communicative Competence (Languages); *Instructional Improvement; *Language Research; Language Teachers; *Learning Processes; Public Policy; *Research Needs; *Research Problems; Secondary Education; *Second Language Learning

ABSTRACT

The principal objectives of this conference were: (1) to become aware of present research relevant to second language learning/teaching; (2) to stress the need for further research; and (3) to establish directions for this further research. Papers include: "Language Needs and Social Policy" (John Trim); "Some Priorities for Research in Second Language Learning" (Paul Meara); "An Outsider's View of Research Needs in Second Language Learning" (Robert Le Page); "Research and the Teacher of Foreign Languages in Secondary Schools" (Brian Page); "Communication Processes: What Do Second Language Learners Need to Be Able to Do?" (David Wilkins); "Language Learning and Acquisition Processes: How Can and Do People Learn?" (Steven McDonough); and "Language Learning in Education: What Research Should Be Done to Help Improve Learning?" (Rosamond Mitchell). A review and summary of the papers, a list of recent and current research in Great Britain, an extensive bibliography, and a participant list are appended. (MSE)

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SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING:

research problems and perspectives

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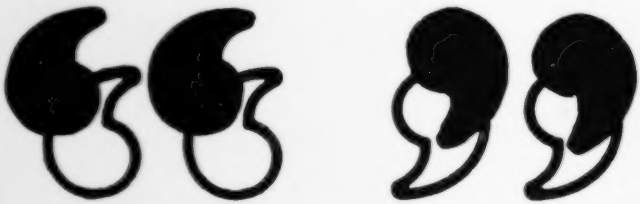

FL016092

Centre for Information on
Language Teaching and Research

CILT Reports and Papers 23

Second language learning: research problems and perspectives

Papers from a conference on Second language learning held at the James Gracie Conference Centre, Birmingham, 24-26 February 1984, with the support of the Economic and Social Research Council

Edited by Christopher Brumfit, Helen Lunt and John Trim

1985

Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research

First published 1985
© 1985 Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research
ISBN 0 948003 40 5

Printed in Great Britain by Multiplex Techniques Ltd

Published by Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, Regent's College, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London NW1 4NS

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Contents

		Page
INTRODUCTION		v
RESEARCH NEEDS IN CONTEXT		1
1.	Language needs and social policy John Trim	3
2.	Some priorities for research in second language learning Paul Meara	12
3.	An outsider's view of research needs in second language learning Robert Le Page	20
4.	Research and the teacher of foreign languages in secondary schools Brian Page	29
MAJOR RESEARCH AREAS		37
5.	Communication processes: what do second language learners need to be able to do? David Wilkins	39
6.	Language learning and acquisition processes: how can and do people learn? Steven McDonough	46
7.	Language learning in education: what research should be done to help improve learning? Rosamond Mitchell	58
WAYS FORWARD		69
8.	Some key problems Christopher Brumfit	71
9.	Discussions in summary	77
APPENDICES		83
1.	Recent and current research in Britain Sarah Death	85
2.	Bibliography Jean Price	96
3.	Conference participants	108

The conference at which these papers were presented was convened with financial support from the Economic and Social Research Council (ref C00262018).

Introduction

The conference at which these papers were presented was convened by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT), with financial support from the Economic and Social Research Council, at the James Gracie Conference Centre, Birmingham, in February 1984. The Conference was convened because of the relative lack of sound knowledge and understanding to underpin our considerable national investment in language learning and teaching. There is far too little empirical, interdisciplinary research to complement the intuitions of experienced teachers and the speculations of theorists.

The Centre was assisted in planning the conference by representatives of the British Association for Applied Linguistics, the National Council for Modern Languages in Higher and Further Education, and the Education and Human Development Committee of the Economic and Social Research Council, among others, and their help is gratefully acknowledged.

The Centre is expected, among its other activities, to keep abreast of research in its field, in order to provide information to those who need it, to the benefit of education in the United Kingdom. The staff of the Centre endeavour, within their limited resources, to identify research problems and provide stimulus for new projects, to advise researchers on the formulation of research proposals, to advise research funding bodies when appropriate, to maintain a general oversight and stimulate relevant work, and generally to facilitate the flow of relevant new ideas from the research field, through applied studies and pilot projects, to teaching and learning, which are the ultimate goal.

The Centre cannot but be aware, therefore, of the very great need, and from many quarters demand, for improved levels of language learning and teaching; one cannot however claim that research has already provided the knowledge and understanding necessary to bring about such improvement. One cannot even say that present knowledge, gained in Britain and elsewhere, is adequately communicated to practitioners (teachers), since it is painfully clear that only relatively small numbers of researchers are working in this field, and that more teachers/teacher trainers/advisers are needed who have a sufficiently advanced knowledge of it (for example, through post-graduate education) to interpret and help apply what is known.

The principal objects of the conference were:

1. to gain a view of the scope of empirical research that is relevant to language learning/teaching

2. to consider whether it is possible to establish a set of questions to which research could supply answers that would extend the body of firm and reliable knowledge underpinning language learning/teaching

3. to assess priorities in terms of the usefulness and feasibility of particular areas of work and kinds of study, taking into account not only what questions are at present unanswered, but also what are the questions to which answers are most urgently needed in this field.

The prepared papers put clearly and cogently the case for work to be done. In three main areas (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7) important questions were identified, and it was clear that people can be found able to tackle them. Some of the practical problems that must be tackled if a research community is to grow in this important area were also identified (Chapter 8).

John Trim opened the conference and set out its context. In his paper he stresses the need for research in second language learning, in the public interest. He draws attention to particular areas (especially trade) in which international contacts, across language barriers, will increase in the future. He points out that we need to make strenuous efforts to provide more adequate language education, and that to achieve such change we must base our action on solid grounds - on a better understanding of the processes of communication and of how to prepare people to participate in communication. Paul Meara, looking at priorities for research, emphasises the need for studies of learning processes, an area that is not, traditionally, well supported, and he makes practical suggestions for the support and encouragement of such work, as well as suggesting specific subjects for investigation.

Robert Le Page draws attention to the needs of society as a whole for cultural depth and pluralism, and points to the relevance for second language learning of much research that has been done (in language acquisition, in social and linguistic matters); acknowledging that relatively little fundamental research is in progress, he offers a salutary reminder that work in fields other than applied linguistics is often neglected by language teachers and applied linguists. He asks language teachers to think about their students, and to endeavour to understand and so to exploit learners' social situation and cultural norms. Brian Page indicates some of the problems of secondary school teachers, and recommends areas for investigation that could yield information of direct benefit to teachers and

learners. He also makes a strong plea for involvement of teachers in research at every stage.

Three papers focus on particular, though broad, aspects of second language learning: what do second language learners need to be able to do? how can and do people learn? and what research should be done to help improve learning? David Wilkins underlines the 'staggering complexity' of oral communication processes, points out that receiving language is not simply a reversal of the process of production (the receiver uses his own frame of reference to arrive at his own interpretation), and asks how L2 users, limited by their various deficiencies in the second language, can communicate, and how they can be taught to communicate; he indicates specific questions for investigation. Steven McDonough reviews five approaches to understanding how people learn second languages, and points to areas in which understanding has been helped by psychological research, but he finds that each approach falls short of providing a satisfactory account of language learning; he also points to new questions, not answered by 'grand theories', and deserving attention, and expects that fuller understanding of basic processes can be reached. Rosamond Mitchell stresses the value of both educational and psycholinguistic research, suggesting as areas for investigation: the teacher, classroom processes (instructional strategies and teacher-pupil interaction), and the L2 learner; progress could also be made in methodology, and insights are to be expected from studies of bilingual education.

Finally, Christopher Brumfit, in a review of key problems and ways forward, identifies different types of research, each important and needing support, but with different aims and requiring different types of research worker; he points to the interdependence of these various kinds of research.

A summary of some contributions made in discussions is provided in Chapter 9; these include suggestions for future research and recommendations on organisational matters that would enable useful work to be carried out. A list of research projects, a selected bibliography and the list of conference participants complete the volume.

Despite the considerable common interests among the conference participants there were different viewpoints and different understandings of basic concepts, which made consensus difficult to achieve in a short conference. Those working in closely related areas may not readily accept the importance of each other's perspectives and evidence, or their relevance in educational contexts. In educational research, for example, the contributions of applied linguistics and of psychology could be thought remote from the very real problems of everyday practice of teaching and learning, and considerable effort will be needed if constructive dialogue on aims, objectives and methods is to be pursued among those concerned.

Participants were also reminded that a great deal of communication and interpretation is needed before language teachers can be expected to receive research findings, consider their importance to particular teaching/learning contexts, and modify their approaches. Some consideration was given to the implications for two-way teacher-researcher relationships.

CILT is very glad to have been enabled to initiate this discussion of needs. Its aims were somewhat ambitious, but this was surely no bad thing. Many ideas were put forward, and although discussion was not always straightforward we remain convinced that the effort involved in pursuing interdisciplinary approaches is worthwhile; we noted that others made a case for this at the conference, and conclude that more will be achieved in this field by co-operation than by competitive attitudes.

Clearly much remains to be done. There are people in Britain qualified to pursue studies of second language learning - some of them have already embarked on such studies; others could be encouraged and stimulated to do so, given confidence that it is an important area, and that some urgent problems are tractable, and given the support of individuals and institutions responsible for work in this area. In editing this volume we hope that it will reach a wider readership, and contribute to the development of research that will be of benefit to second language learning and teaching.

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Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research

October 1984

RESEARCH NEEDS IN CONTEXT

1. Language needs and social policy

John Trim

The holding of this conference represents in some ways a statement of faith by CILT that it is both desirable and possible to identify the areas in which research can effectively be carried out which will increase our understanding of second language learning. We wish to do so, of course, in the expectation that researchers and those who support their work will be stimulated to direct research effort into projects which, from this point of view, can be seen to be both useful and practicable. We are glad to hear that the National Council for Modern Languages in Higher and Further Education intends to follow up this conference by another which would consider the funding of research.

A humanistic view of language studies in universities takes their purpose as being 'to provide through linguistic and literary studies a humane education which may, or may not, be vocationally useful'. This is the context within which most modern language research is conducted. Various kinds of modern language research can be distinguished: literary research still predominates; traditional philological scholarship has declined, and mainstream linguistic research - for example, into the properties of grammars - has so far offered little scope for practical application to language learning and teaching. Work in applied linguistics has greatly enriched the teaching of English as a foreign language, but has until recently had little impact on the learning and teaching of foreign languages. It seems worthwhile to review this position and take a more general view of needs and priorities for research relevant to second language learning and teaching.

The reasons for and effects of the continuing dominance of literary research merit consideration. Those disciplines which primarily relate to languages, that is English and modern languages, are usually classified as 'arts' or 'humanities'. As such, they are concerned with the promotion of literary scholarship (the distinction between research and scholarship is extremely blurred in the humanities), and so research is channelled overwhelmingly into the study of literary figures and literary movements. All but some six of the 80 pages listing research in the 1982-1983 guide to research in progress in French (Society for French Studies, 1983) are on literary topics. The mechanisms which control finance, organisation and recruitment are all strongly self-reinforcing. The autonomy of departments in determining their teaching programmes and conducting examinations, monitored only by colleagues they have chosen as suitable,

inevitably means that undergraduate teaching is directly related to the research interests of university staff and, in many cases, this is overtly stated.

All these factors encourage the staff of university language departments to spend their lives relatively unchallenged in a closed society. This society is, however, increasingly set in amber. Its attempt, through 'A'-level syllabuses, to create sixth forms in its own image writ small is increasingly unacceptable to schools, and teachers find themselves equipped with knowledge and skills they cannot use yet lacking in those they need - while other employers of graduates have made it clear on a number of occasions that they do not look to universities to produce truly advanced language skills. Thus the Air Transport and Travel Industry Training Board research report 80/2 Foreign languages in the air transport industry states on page 27, 'Once management has decided to give its backing to foreign languages, it is clear that there is no use in relying on the education system to produce linguists'. However it is difficult to see why, if left to itself, the present system should not be almost indefinitely self-perpetuating.

There was an attempt, in the 1960s, to co-ordinate and steer research and development work relevant to the learning and teaching of modern languages, and to provide some special funding to stimulate work in areas thought to be in the national interest. The Committee on Research and Development in Modern Languages (CRDML), established in 1964, was short-lived, however, and for many reasons its work did not produce the dramatic short-term improvement in language teaching which its sponsors may have hoped to see. In 1970, when CRDML was wound up, the official view seems to have been that modern languages had had special consideration for long enough and should now receive no more support and financial encouragement than any other curricular subject. Since 1970, there has been no machinery to co-ordinate research work in the area of second language learning and teaching or to establish priorities in the light of an overall social policy or to promote research work of an appropriate kind.

Of course, modern languages have continued to receive special support in that central government funding for CILT has been maintained. CILT's register of research in progress, as well as its conferences and publications, have all been designed to keep researchers in touch with each other, to keep them well-informed of developments within the field, and to facilitate a two-way interaction between teaching and research. In this way, the activities of CILT have, we believe, played a useful part in stimulating and supporting research. However, the role of CILT is defined in its Trust Deed as the collection and dissemination of information. It has no remit, and no budget, for funding research.

To turn to the matter of establishing priorities: the basis for such a move might be

1. the identification of those research problems, the solution of which is fundamental to the understanding of the processes of second language acquisition and learning and is a necessary prerequisite for more applied studies;

2. agreement upon language needs and social policy.

Public policy in the language field may be directed towards

1. ensuring that language skills are available to meet the commercial, industrial, diplomatic and military requirements of the country as they may be expected to develop over the next, say, twenty years;

2. promoting the social and cultural development of the individuals who constitute the society concerned.

That attempts should be made to guide research on a national level in this way is, of course, not self-evident or universally accepted. State studentships, for instance, have traditionally been awarded on the basis of individual merit and without subject quotas or reference to public policy. I was myself verbally assured on one occasion that, if the top ten firsts in the country wished to study Egyptology, then that would be the direction in which the money would go. The research councils, on the other hand, have been under steady and increasing pressure to promote research which clearly serves the national interest. In an area where postdoctoral funded research scarcely exists, an apparently non-interventionist stance on the part of those who fund postgraduate research leaves the responsibility for its direction in the hands of individual departments. This does not mean that there is no policy. It means rather that that policy is determined not by considerations of national interest but by the existing ideology and career structure of the universities.

Such a critique as the one I have set out above is, of course, far too sweeping and general. It is almost certain to alienate and even insult members of this conference who, by their very acceptance of our invitation, have shown themselves to be outside this picture. A number particularly of the newer universities have a much stronger practical orientation and have long application lists from would-be students. Our system of university financing, however, goes far to prevent that demand being effective. Again, the polytechnics and similar institutions of higher education in the public sector have a different approach and are generally much more concerned to produce the kind of linguistic proficiency in their graduates which one would expect industry and commerce to welcome. However, polytechnics have not been officially encouraged to regard research as an integral part of their activity as have universities. Nevertheless, some interesting and important research projects have been undertaken within the polytechnics and colleges. I might cite as simply

one example the survey of language needs in polytechnics carried out by Ealing College of Higher Education (Gardner and Winslow, 1982) with the co-operation of the Standing Conference of Heads of Modern Languages in Polytechnics and Other Colleges.

The investigation of language needs in society generally is notoriously difficult since the term may cover a very wide range of concepts, such as expectations, demands, interests, necessities, motivations, desires, ideas and even fantasies (Richterich, 1983, p 2). Commerce and industry have shown relative indifference in the face of continuing attempts by the language teaching profession to engage their interest. It is not clear whether this is due to a low level of linguistic requirement on the part of the United Kingdom in view of its special linguistic position, or to a low level of awareness in industry and commerce of the advantages to be gained in world markets and collaborative ventures by increased linguistic skills on the part of their work force, or to a low level of confidence on their part in the ability of the public education system to produce the right kind of product. Investigations reported over the last decade (York survey on the use of foreign languages in the private sector of industry and commerce (Emmans and others, 1974), Royal Society of Arts BETRO Trust report 1979, Air Transport and Travel Industry Training Board Research Report 1980) indicate that all three are present.

When dealing with countries which are not at home with English our insistence on communicating only on our terms in our language (or even more our complacent assumption that of course the other party will use English) has, in my view, caused Britain to acquire a - perhaps deservedly - poor reputation in these respects. This failure is, in my view, at least partially responsible for the distortions in our trade figures for January-November 1983. These show us to have a positive balance with North America and the Commonwealth, but to be in deficit with Europe. Significantly, we are in balance with France whose language dominates our educational scene. Deficits with all German-speaking countries account for two-thirds of our world trade deficit. We have only weak penetration into the German home market, although it is open to us under EC arrangements well-respected by the German government. It is well known that Germans 'sell in English but buy in German'. We have no penetration into the Japanese home market, and also a large deficit with Latin America (perhaps exacerbated by political factors). Trade with the Soviet Union runs at a very low level, though experts such as Prfessor Pockney (University of Surrey) consider it ripe for a considerable expansion.

A number of important questions arise:

1. Can a national languages policy be arrived at without definite information on the present and expected future needs of the country in respect of commerce, industry, public services, diplomacy and possible military requirements?

2. Does an adequate information base already exist?
3. If not, are the means for carrying out an investigation of national needs available, or should they be developed?
4. Do we now have that 'clarification of the general concepts and methodology involved in forecasting national manpower needs' that the Department of Education and Science found to be lacking in 1970 (Committee on Research and Development in Modern Languages, 1971, p 10)?
5. Is an enquiry into national language needs in fact necessary and desirable?

If business use is uncertain, Department of Trade and Industry and British Tourist Authority figures show that personal travel increased in the decade 1972-82 in both directions: 'to the UK' by 56%, 'overseas by UK residents' by 93%. Between 1981 and 1982 visits abroad rose by 8% to just over 20 million. Overseas visitors to this country rose by 2% to 11½m. Of the visits out 17½m were to the European Community and other parts of Western Europe with France and Spain accounting for 8½m of these. 7m of the 11½m visitors to this country came from Western Europe. Though the figure of 11½m visitors to this country seems small compared with 123m trips taken by British residents in Britain in 1982, the number of nights spent away from home is in the proportion of 136.8m from abroad to 505m within the country. It seems clear that personal mobility, upon which the Council of Europe has based its language policy, is increasing at a considerable rate, even through the present period of depression.

While the Mediterranean countries are popular tourist goals, it is noteworthy that the steepest rate of increase in British visits was to the Low Countries, which are not traditional tourist goals. The predominance of France as a tourist goal may justify to some extent the dominance of French in the British educational system or, of course, it may be in some ways a consequence of that dominance. Since business trips accounted for about one seventh of visits abroad and one fifth of visits to this country, it seems that private reasons predominate. It would be interesting to know to what extent and for what purposes the 13m British visitors abroad who were not on package holidays used or felt the need for foreign languages and, similarly, how many of the 11½m visitors to this country were dealt with or would have wished to be dealt with in a language other than English. Overall, the British travel account shows a negative balance of £466m for 1982. This was entirely accounted for by a deficit with Western Europe of £1,400m not compensated for by the surplus of a little under £1000m with North America and other areas. (British Business, 15-21 July 1983, and Tourism Intelligence Quarterly, vol 6 no. 4, 1983.)

While I have at the time of writing no information on the use of foreign language media, e.g. books, newspapers, films etc, in the

United Kingdom (beyond the astonishing 1.8m audience for Buongiorno Italia in 1982-83), mobility figures seem to justify the belief that the most important individual motivation for language learning will be the desire to communicate directly with foreign language speakers in face-to-face situations. If this is so, then the processes of face-to-face interaction involving the use of a foreign language require more careful investigation than they have so far received. Linguistic orthodoxy has strongly favoured pluralism with regard to forms of speech current among native speakers within a linguistic community. The attitude to foreign speakers has been remarkably normative and puristic. It has been assumed that the forms used by groups of foreigners which deviate from native speaker norms are errors, having no status or right to exist even where they are characteristic of large groups of speakers and have no deleterious effect upon communication. The eradication of these 'errors' has often been the main aim of language teaching, at the expense of such desirable things as the growth of confidence, the development of communication strategies using limited means and the increase in available resources.

A good deal of research has been carried out in recent years, with regard primarily to English and secondarily to German, in such areas as discourse analysis, conversational analysis, text linguistics, speech act analysis, the analysis of language as social action. With the exception of work on clarification and repair strategies, relatively little research has been undertaken into the detailed processes of co-operation and communication in a second language. Are the techniques equally applicable to conversations between native and non-native speakers or between non-native speakers using a third language as a lingua franca? If so, are the results helpful to the planning of language learning and language teaching and, if so, in what ways? We should perhaps remember that (as in first language acquisition) the communicative success of a reduced linguistic system may cause it to ossify and be thus a barrier to further learning.

Questions such as these may become increasingly important in the course of the next generation - and in planning the education of children now we have, of course, to think in terms of the early years of the third millennium rather than the end of the twentieth century. A growing density of communication, with increasing interpersonal contacts between speakers of different languages, normally leads to a greater interpenetration of the languages concerned, with the participating languages exchanging loan-words, employing an increasing proportion of international words, using calques or literal translations, affecting all linguistic levels including syntax. The direction of linguistic influences is the result of social pressures of varying kinds. The influence is to some extent mutual, though at the moment the predominant influence in the European area is from (American) English. In this light, the model of French and

German currently taught in schools is very puristic. Educated German speech and, particularly, writing employs foreign words and loan-words on a large scale. These have generally been replaced by 'proper German words' in language teaching textbooks. How far can the acceptance of the natural process go without acquiring the stigma of pidginisation or macaronic speech?

Macaronic conversations are possible in another sense, that is that each speaker uses his native language, calling upon a wide range of its resources, tailored perhaps to some extent by the fact of talking to a non-native speaker, and understands the language used by the interlocutor. Procedures of this sort are already not uncommon in international conferences or small international working groups that operate without simultaneous interpretation. What is known of this form of interaction? What differences are entailed in the kind of mental operation required of the participants? What in turn is implied for the objectives and process of language learning? To what extent can and should problem-solving strategies be incorporated into language learning - indeed, to what extent can they even replace language learning? This question may become increasingly relevant as technical devices based on microprocessors in miniaturised equipment invade the language-using scene. We already have primitive mechanised phrase-books and dictionaries, some of them incorporating speech synthesis circuits. What developments in such devices can be expected over the next, say, ten years?

In addition to the far from exhausted possibilities of increasingly complex and cheapening microcomputers, a further important technical development is satellite television, which will make authentic materials in different foreign languages immediately available. How far, of course, this will wean viewers away from their favourite channel is not at all clear. The immediate availability of an indefinitely large number of radio stations has clearly not had that effect. Television, however, with its more immediate appeal and the greater accessibility of the video channel, may have quite different consequences.

I have attempted to outline above some of the many factors that must be taken into account in formulating a social policy to govern the specification of objectives for language learning programmes. I have not taken into account the more general educational objectives relating to the cognitive, affective and social development of individuals within an educational system, either those which are common to all curricular subjects or those for which modern languages appear to play some special role; they too must be taken into account, particularly when advocating particular kinds of learning and teaching method. A central question must be: how far can decisions on the objectives of language learning programmes be arrived at by appropriate pieces of research or how far are they more quickly, and perhaps more effectively, arrived at by a combination of intuition and

experience? We should also like to know to what extent global objectives, having been set down in terms perhaps of language use, can be converted into fully specified syllabuses and, further, how the necessary build-up of competence, skills and strategies can be accomplished under different conditions. If we consider, for example, programmes for migrants immersed in a new society, with limited educational experience, or for children in schools learning a foreign language, or for adults preparing themselves to face new job demands, the identifiable parameters will be different. Accordingly, the aims and objectives, the modes of use and the conditions of learning will be different.

In what ways can research in linguistics, both theoretical and applied, in sociolinguistics and in psycholinguistics help those who have to organise and carry out such teaching programmes to make the best provision for those for whom they are responsible? How much of this research has already been carried out, so that it is a matter of making research findings or research procedures better known and more generally usable? How far do such decisions ultimately rest upon factors that we do not understand either because the research, though conceived, has not been carried out, or perhaps because the right questions have not yet been asked? If this conference can ensure, firstly, that the right questions are identified and that ways of answering them are adumbrated and that the teaching profession in its broadest sense - what I have called the partnership for learning - is made aware of relevant research and given access to its findings, then our time will have been very well spent.

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2. Some priorities for research in second language learning

Paul Meara

As far as I have been able to ascertain, the last time the topic of this conference was formally discussed in a public forum was at a meeting of the Committee on Research and Development in Modern Languages (CRDML) in 1967. At that meeting, Donald Broadbent submitted a paper entitled 'Notes on current knowledge concerning the psychology of learning modern languages' (subsequently published), in which he reviewed the current state of research, and suggested areas which would profit from active development. Broadbent drew attention to the lack of any coherent programme of research on second language learning, and pointed out how little of the available research was in any sense empirical. He discussed a number of areas of research in psychology which might be able to throw light on second language acquisition. He gave some consideration to the way contemporary developments in language teaching practice only partially reflected what was becoming known about the psychology of learning. The paper concluded by suggesting three areas where Broadbent felt that useful research could be carried out: the role of meaning in learning languages; the optimum point for introducing formal grammar; and the development of perceptual discrimination in the second language. In short, several needs and a set of priorities were identified.

The paper makes depressing reading for those of us involved in L2 research in the 1980s. While the extent of our knowledge about L2 acquisition is not perhaps as parlous as it was in the late sixties, many of the criticisms that Broadbent made are still applicable, and in many areas, our understanding of language learning has made little real progress. Broadbent's three conclusions are still largely true, at least as far as research in the UK is concerned. Broadbent wrote:

> '(a) There is very little indeed that has been published directly in this area using the methods and criteria of academic psychology.
>
> (b) There is a very large amount of expertise and opinion-based activity amongst language teachers, which is based on assumptions about human behaviour and which seem to work. It would not however come up to the scientific standards of a purist psychologist.
>
> (c) There are a large number of areas of general psychology which are of relevance, but the full implications have not been

worked out in the special situation of language learning.' (Broadbent, 1967).

It seems to me that (b) and (c) still apply without reservation. (a) is slightly less easy to evaluate, however, as there has been a considerable growth in research on L2 acquisition in the last 20 years. On the other hand, research in most fields has mushroomed over the same period, and it is probably true to say that though the absolute number of research projects in this field has grown, it has probably declined as a fraction of the total amount of research in the UK. In any case, the total number of projects actively being pursued in the area is very small. The list of ongoing research projects supplied by CILT for this conference amounts to 23 items. A number of these projects have actually lapsed, a number are only tangentially related to language learning, and of the remainder, only a handful seem to involve empirical research which is likely to be applicable in the long term. Much the same picture emerges from other surveys. Vivian Cook's (1978) survey, for example, lists just over 100 articles and publications dealing with the psycholinguistics of second language learning. Only ten of these are authored by people working in the UK, and only half of these are reports of proper empirical research work. The quality of this work is difficult to assess, but using Broadbent's 'criteria of academic psychology' would reduce the number of significant studies to a mere handful.

In this respect, then, the initiatives that the CRDML took to foster research in L2 learning appear to have been something of a failure. Research of the sort they envisaged does not seem to have materialised in response to their efforts. No coherent policy for research in L2 acquisition emerged as a result of the Committee's discussions, and no tradition of empirical work in the field was generated. Given the similarities beween the concerns of the CRDML and the concerns of this conference, it is perhaps worth pondering this failure, in order to understand why the CRDML's initiatives over research were much less successful than they ought to have been.

It seems to me that it is possible to identify four principal factors in L2 research which make it different from straightforward 'academic psychology'. Each of these factors makes it difficult to undertake and organise empirical research in our field, and imposes some constraints on the type of research that can be envisaged.

Firstly, the language teaching profession is a peculiar one in that it does not naturally produce people with an orientation towards research. Few language teachers have any training in a research-based discipline. Most of us studied literature at university; some of us may have done research of a literary sort. Few of us are really numerate, however, and hardly any of us have any formal training in research methods, statistics, computing, or any of the other skills which form the stock in trade of the researcher. This

means that language teachers typically think about language learning in ways which are not easy to convert into good empirical research. Most of us will be familiar with the professor of literature who wants to find the best way of teaching French to second-year undergraduates, for example, or the teacher of German who wants to show that his new textbook produces better results than any other. It is obvious to me, and to anybody with a proper research training, that questions such as this are inappropriate topics for formal reseach projects. It is also clear, however, that this inappropriateness is far from obvious to many of our colleagues, and some of us may even be able to recall projects of precisely this sort which have been set up and funded in the not too distant past.

The lack of proper research training also shows itself in the staffing of university departments where applied linguistics and related studies are taught. These departments have typically tended to recruit older members of staff with long teaching experience; research experience, especially empirical reseach experience, has not been a high priority for these centres. The reasons for this emphasis are obvious, and indeed highly laudable, but again, it has placed considerable limitation on the type of research work on language learning that these institutions can undertake.

Another facet of the same problem is that there is no tradition in the UK of employing bright young graduate students on research projects in our field. Most of the active people in research in this country are in their late thirties, and many are considerably older than this. This situation contrasts dramatically with other subjects, where much of the innovative, state-of-the-art research is produced by young graduate students in their early twenties. We have no obvious career structure for young people interested in pursuing research into L2 acquisition, and consequently, few bright, properly trained young people ever think of doing research in this area. (See Christopher Brumfit's 'Schematic representation' on p 76).

These demographic and structural considerations have had a marked effect on the type of research that is carried out in the UK. Innovative and speculative we may be, but empirical we are not.

A second factor which the CRDML perhaps underestimated is that empirical research costs money, and requires a basic level of facilities which many departments just do not have. Many colleagues working on language learning belong to language departments, which traditionally do not have research budgets. Even departments of linguistics and language centres tend to be grossly underequipped and underfinanced, compared with what one would expect in, say, a typical psychology department. In addition, until very recently, the SSRC/ESRC and other funding bodies have appeared to be very reluctant to fund research projects in second language acquisition. The result of this has been that those of us who have attempted to do

empirical research work have been hampered by lack of equipment and resources. This can be seen in the studies in CILT's list, most of which are small-scale projects, with no visible means of support, using small numbers of subjects, and a pencil and paper technology. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that good people who might have been interested in the area have been seduced away to other areas where money, equipment and tangible rewards have generally been more freely available.

Another factor which makes research into language learning rather different from other similar areas is that there is no real tradition of co-operative research in our field. In most sectors of the economy there is a tradition of close co-operation between university departments and the consumers of basic research - chiefly industry and government - and it is common for external agencies to commission research in important areas, or to indicate problem areas for which urgent solutions are required. In our field, there are very few examples of collaborative research of this kind. With the exception of the National Foundation for Educational Research, perhaps, most of the research we do tends to be rather theoretical in nature, and rather unresponsive to demands made by consumers in as much as they are articulated at all. Certainly, the dominant model of research in the UK is a hierarchical one, where expert researchers produce ideas and pass them on to language teachers whose job is to implement them as they see fit. There is, however, very little traffic in the other direction. It is very difficult for teachers' groups to commission research, or even to indicate what sorts of research might be useful to them. There are hardly any instances of publishers sponsoring research work, though the recent establishment of a lexicography research unit is an interesting example of what publishers might do. The private sector in English language teaching is not involved in research to any serious extent either, despite the fact that the size of the EFL operation in this country makes it a major contributor to the economy.

This situation seems to me to be an unfortunate one. It means that the research we do is often reduced to an intellectual exercise, with no natural audience. As a result, a lot of this work, even when it is good quality research, is likely to go unread, and never reach the people who could make best use of it. More seriously, it means that an unavoidable split develops between those of us who see ourselves primarily as language teachers and those of us who think we are primarily researchers - a split that is amply in evidence at this conference.

None of these factors is a particularly recent phenomenon. All of them existed in the late sixties, just as they exist now, and all of them contributed in some form or other to the poor response which the work of the CRDML produced. They are equally likely to stymie the efforts of this conference, unless we are careful to take them fully into account.

However, there was a fourth factor which contributed to the general lack of interest in the CRDML's deliberations. The Committee itself decided that it did not wish to commission research, partly, one supposes, for financial reasons, but not entirely so. The minutes of the Sub-Committee where Broadbent's paper was discussed state:

> 'It was agreed that this record of the discussion, together with Dr Broadbent's paper, should then ... be sent through CILT to Departments of Psychology at Universities and others; at the same time inviting information of relevant work being done or contemplated. Whilst avoiding 'commissioning research', to which there were strong objections, it was believed that this action might most effectively stimulate basic research relevant to the theme of the psychology of learning modern languages, and particularly to the gaps mentioned in Dr Broadbent's paper, leading to the submission of projects suitable for the Committee's consideration.' (sic)

The minutes do not record what these 'strong objections' were - though it is not hard to guess. Nor is it hard to imagine what sort of response emerged from the departments which received the paper. With hindsight, it might have been more effective for the Committee to commission some very specific research projects, and to provide some sort of financial incentives for people to work in the areas considered important. In fairness, it should be pointed out that the Committee itself was probably not well placed to carry out an initiative of this sort. Of the eight senior academics who took part in the discussions, none has consequently carried out research of the sort that Broadbent outlined, and indeed, to my knowledge only one has shown a sustained interest in the wider problems of second language learning. Add to this the limited financial power that the Committee had, and the structural problems I have already mentioned, and it is easy to see that the ground which CRDML was trying to sow was very stony indeed.

What lessons can we learn from the experience of CRDML? It seems to me that if this conference hopes to have any lasting impact on the type of research into L2 learning that is carried out in this country, then it needs to address itself to three problems.

The first problem is the isolation of researchers from the rest of the language learning and teaching community, and the élitism that this breeds. I can see two ways in which this problem could be tackled. One is to deliberately create situations where teachers and researchers can talk to each other, and generally to increase the flow of information from teachers to researchers. At the moment, for example, CILT does a splendid job disseminating and documenting research findings. It would be equally useful if someone like CILT kept a register of people with problems that needed to be solved, or even better, could act as a sort of broker, putting problems in

touch with potential solvers. If the experience of the Dutch 'science shops' is anything to go by, this sort of exchange system can be interesting, highly innovative, and produce worthwhile results on both the practical level and the theoretical one.

The second solution to the élitism problem is to involve more people in the research process. Most research in the social sciences is carried out by teams of people, with very different skills. In contrast, a large part of the research we do is carried out by one researcher, possibly with the help of a research assistant, and very little involvement on the part of anyone else, except as guinea pigs or subjects in experiments. The limitations on this type of research are obvious.

The second problem concerns personnel. At the time of the CRDML there were very few people with formal training in research methods. Fortunately, this situation is changing, and many MA courses now have some formal research training as part of their programme. Ironically, this doesn't seem to have led to a marked increase in the number of trained people in this country who hold positions of responsibility and influence, since the majority of people who take MA courses eventually go overseas. On the other hand, courses in linguistics and psychology, while not common, are less rare than they were twenty years ago, and this means that there are a number of young graduates with training in the appropriate disciplines, and often themselves bilingual, who could carry out good quality research if they were attracted into this area. The problem for us at the moment is that other areas are much more attractive to good graduate students - given a choice between a job or a prestigious Alvey project, and an uncertain position on a second language learning project, it would take a very special kind of person to opt for the latter. It seems to me that this conference ought to consider how we can generate a number of research posts with properly equipped projects and good facilities which would be an attractive proposition to young researchers.

This problem brings us back to the third problem, finance. There seems to be a general view that it is very difficult to raise money for research into second language acquisition. My own view is that the situation is not really as bad as it is sometimes made out to be, but that efforts to raise money are hampered by some very simple obstacles, which a conference of this sort ought to be able to do something about. These obstacles fall into two classes.

Firstly, there is no general feeling among the wider research community that second language learning is a problem worth investigating. This means that when I compete against other people asking for money, I am up against a credibility problem. Language and the Aged, for example, or Language in Schizophrenia, seem superficially appealing in a way that second language learning is not. This is

largely a question of public relations, and it would help very greatly if this conference could create a climate in which second language acquisition was not looked on as a third-rate research area.

Secondly, I have found that it is often difficult to develop a large-scale research proposal because many of the basic research tools that I would need in a large project have not been developed. For example, if I want to do a study of vocabulary development in advanced adult learners of Spanish, then I need some accurate and reliable measure of how advanced my subjects are, some measure of how well individual vocabulary items have been internalised, and probably other ancillary measures such as attitude profiles and measures of what might broadly be called language learning style. None of these measures currently exists, and so when I frame my grant application, I am severely constrained. Either I have to develop these tests myself from scratch, which increases the length of the project, and pushes up its cost, or I ignore the problem, and leave myself open to the charge of being naïve. Either way, my application compares poorly with what, say, a psycholinguist might be able to achieve with the same amount of money. At the same time, of course, applications for small grants to develop tools of this sort do not seem to meet with favour either, perhaps because they seem essentially trivial, or perhaps because the need for them is not apparent to those working in other fields. It would be extremely useful if this conference could identify a list of basic research tools that need to be developed, and if we could produce a convincing case that might persuade the ESRC and other bodies that it would be worth commissioning them.

To sum up then, in this paper, I have used the experience of the CRDML as a convenient handle on which to hang a number of ideas that I would like this conference to consider. It seems to me that the CRDML initiatives were less successful than they might have been because they did not take into account a number of structural factors that affect the people available to do research in our field. They also failed because the recommendations of the CRDML were limited to exhortations which were out of touch with the wider research climate. I hope that this conference will be able to avoid this set of mistakes, and especially that it will be able to make recommendations in three specific areas: a) to find ways of involving young research workers in research projects, and making the field an attractive one to work in; b) to find ways of involving teachers and other consumers of research in ongoing research projects, and to create a climate in which consumers can commission specific research studies; c) to produce a list of basic research tools which need to be developed, and to persuade funding bodies of the value of developing them.

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3. An outsider's view of research needs in second language learning

Robert Le Page

I am to some extent an outsider in the discussions of this symposium, invited I think to present a point of view about the learning of languages which may differ in some quite fundamental ways, as perhaps also in trivial ways, from those of the professional modern language teacher. I should explain that the only languages I teach, or teach about, professionally are Old English and Creole English, and that our Department of Language at the University of York is centrally concerned with the light which linguistics, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics can throw upon learning, and especially upon language learning. The advanced command we require in each of our students of one European and one African or Asian language, and an understanding of Creole, are pursuits valuable in themselves for reasons I shall discuss, but are also necessary adjuncts to the process of understanding how language works as a human phenomenon, and what it means to 'learn a language'. We believe this understanding to be an indispensable part of the proper training of a teacher - although to date in fact widely dispensed with in teacher training. However, we leave training in linguistic pedagogy to our friends and close colleagues in the Language Teaching Centre. It is interesting to us that, working together over the years, some of our own views and some of those of our colleagues under the direction first of Eric Hawkins and latterly of Peter Green have tended to converge in significant ways as to what is of importance in language learning and language teaching research.

This rather lengthy prolegomena may help to explain why I am unable to accept a number of the assumptions underlying proposals for research programmes in second language learning either openly expressed or tacitly accepted at this symposium. I do not believe that any case for research designed to strengthen second language learning in this country will stand the test of time unless it starts by challenging every single one of these assumptions. I cannot for example accept without question the assertion of one speaker, that it was axiomatic that every child should have the opportunity of learning French. Why French? Why a language? What <u>is</u> the peculiar virtue of learning a second language (always assuming that we understand what it means to learn a second language, or that there is indeed any single isolable meaning to such a term)? John Trim wished to identify research problems fundamental to understanding the processes of second language learning, but narrowed his field to public policy directed towards (a) commercial and professional needs for people to be able to handle a second language and (b) the needs of individuals

to develop socially and culturally. He did not mention the needs of society as a whole for cultural depth and pluralism, and this seems to me a significant omission, since I find the discussion of language teaching and learning in this country still, in spite of the minorities in our midst from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Caribbean, very Eurocentric.

Having just (September 1984) spent a month in France, I find as usual that many French and English interact fairly successfully in the tourist sphere, and culturally also (music, theatre, architecture, food), with minimal amounts of any second language on either side. Having then attended a conference at Thames Polytechnic on the role of unwritten languages (e.g. Creoles, Romani) in education, I feel that we should be devoting greater resources and with greater urgency to research in these areas; having spent some of my time in France questioning a French social worker assigned for some years past to work with the Strasbourg gypsy communities, I learn that the larger of the two gypsy groups there all speak three languages - Romani, Alsatian and French - and that while they need the latter two for everyday working purposes they safeguard their Romani identity, and use their variety of Romani among themselves, very assiduously, partly in response to the genocide attempted by the Nazis and partly in reaction to the threat from immigrant Spanish gypsies who have become richer than they are and who speak a dialect of Romani they do not understand. Many of them remain virtually illiterate, French being their only language with a written system. Such complex motives for language learning, language use and language retention are fairly well understood and empirically attested in the literature of sociolinguistics. There is also increasing exploration today (see e.g. Sebba, 1984) of the reasons why teenagers, black and white, learn and use, or try to use, London Jamaican, and of what 'learning and using London Jamaican' means.

But how often do we hear the question 'Why learn a second language?' answered, as far as English boys and girls are concerned, in terms of comparable empirical research rather than in terms of dogmatic assertion by those with vested interests? What really is the survival value, or the interest value, or the cash value, or the self-rewarding value, for such youngsters of learning a second language? What really is the value to their community in having them achieve such a skill? What sort of learning has to be achieved in order to benefit from each of these values? And how much do the answers to these questions vary from individual to individual, sex to sex, age-group to age-group, social class to social class, region to region and from language to language? The teacher's role is essentially an enabling role - but what is the potential that can be enabled? (A general framework for the answers to such questions is suggested in Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, forthcoming).

Such research sounds like the kind of work normally funded by the

ESRC. It sounds as though it must be quantitative. It sounds as though hypotheses might have to be formulated and then tested. Here I should like to enter a caveat. I do not wish for a moment to suggest that research which might help to answer the questions I have asked must be of this kind. John Trim has claimed that modern language research is channelled overwhelmingly into the study of literary figures and literary movements. This is the kind of research normally funded through their libraries and minor research grants by the universities and the British Academy. But there are many other kinds of research which contribute to our understanding of learning in between the quantifiable-hypothetical and the bookish-literary. It is true that in the Autumn 1983 Newsletter of the National Council for Modern Languages in Higher and Further Education the list of recently funded research projects, containing approximately fifty-three items, included only about ten concerned with the teaching and learning of the chief European languages. One of these was a major project carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research, concerned with the assessment of the performance of schoolchildren in modern languages. If we look a little further afield however we find that there are already major research projects not only in this country (work on Punjabi, on Welsh, on Gaelic, on Creoles for example) but also in France, Germany, in the United States and Canada, in India, in Hong Kong, in Italy, in South America, in Australia, in Russia, some of the quantitative sociolinguistic kind, some in-depth anecdotal studies, some laboratory-based psycholinguistics, some general linguistics, some more anecdotally-based or historical studies in applied linguistics. (A fairly extensive bibliography will be found in Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, forthcoming). Many of these throw light on the questions I have asked.

Yet when I read much of the output on second language learning in this country it seems to me highly ethnocentric, highly incestuous, applied linguists citing other applied linguists, very little of it citing work more basic or fundamental, or drawing conclusions from studies in other countries. Quite a lot of research is going on, far from all of it literary; perhaps too little of it goes back to first principles. However, a great deal can be learned about the possible social reasons why children do or not learn a second language and what different things learning a second language can mean, by comparing different communities: within Malaysia, for example, as between Malays, Tamils and Chinese, or between Malaysia and Singapore; or within Alsace, or Canada, or Germany. Much of the information is already available in the now extensive literature of sociolinguistics.

One further caveat at this stage concerns the word 'research' itself. The chairman of the University Grants Committee recently made a distinction between 'research' and 'scholarship'. My mathematician colleagues tell me it is for them a sensible distinction; for me it

is not. I do not think scientism should lead linguists or educationists into adopting it and into believing that only 'research' is 'scientific'. In the West Indies in the 1950s I became concerned that low levels of achievement in the Cambridge Overseas and London GCE English Language examinations debarred so many children from any hope of further education or economic advance (see Le Page, 1968). The linguistic survey which we started, funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, had as its aim the enlightenment of us all about the linguistic problems confronting West Indian children. Among other objectives we decided on a descriptive grammar, phonology and lexicon of the vernacular of each island. The work involved fieldwork, work in libraries, the investigation of many unfamiliar African languages and English dialects, the writing of a preparatory historical study of the slave trade to Jamaica, the careful acoustic analysis of tape-recorded material, linguistic analysis and the slow formulation and reformulation of appropriate linguistic theories. It would be quite impossible in all this to draw a line between 'scholarship' and 'research'. It seems to me that many teachers of languages would be in a position to make careful and acute observations on the pupils they teach, combining 'scholarship' and 'research' and contributing a great deal to answering the questions I have asked, had they had the appropriate training; very often few resources are required except time and patience and the necessary skills. We know, of course, that calls on the time of teachers are enormous; perhaps among the causes a symposium of this kind could adopt are those of adequate teacher preparation, and considerable extension of part-time release for empirical research in the achievement or non-achievement of pupils.

One area of quite fundamental research which is becoming of increasing interest to some sociolinguists in this country and is bound to be of great importance eventually to teachers, is concerned with what is meant by such terms as 'a language', 'native language', 'standard language' and 'correct language', and how such concepts have come into existence in different communities; how their meaning differs from one community to another; how the idea of 'correct language' is applied prescriptively in different communities, and how what is taught in the classroom and examined in the examination system relates to the vernacular, to the language the teacher actually uses, and to the written language. Relating all this to the classroom teaching of second languages requires a distinction to be made between teaching a language as a subject, and as an object, and distinguishing between various meanings of the term 'language X'. In diglossic situations, languages are commonly studied as 'objects' - that is, there is a body of scripture, of texts, of grammar, lexicon, literature to be studied, and on which students are examined. To teach a language as a subject, as one teaches mathematics as a subject, on the other hand is to teach command of a tool which can then be used and developed for other purposes - to talk about things, discuss propositions, write verse. I believe this distinc-

tion to be essential and fundamental to the discussion of second language learning and teaching.

It is very difficult to argue convincingly a blanket case for the peculiar value in the school curriculum of learning a second language. I have already made the distinction between value to the community and value to the individual. If one considers the former first, it may well be that the needs of the community are best met by a highly élitist approach, the training of a select band of translators and interpreters, such as used to be the case in Britain. Singapore may be compared with Malaysia in this respect: Singapore has gone steadily more and more away from English as a second language towards all-out English-medium education in the interests of economic survival, replacing the Chinese-medium schools in which English was taught as a 'subject' (more often, as an object) with English-medium. The Chinese-medium Nanyang University has been absorbed into the English-medium National University. At the same time the Government promotes the learning and using of Mandarin instead of their southern Chinese dialects in the interests of political unity among the Chinese population and of possible future relations with China. The programme, pushed through with characteristic speed and efficiency, has nevertheless demanded very considerable financial resources, the importation of many native speakers of English, and the total sacrifice of the vernaculars. One result has been a widespread complaint, echoed at Government level, that young people lack any sense of the traditional moral values of their own vernacular cultures. Malaysia on the other hand has pursued Malay-medium education for all in the interests of the political and cultural hegemony of the Malays and the redistribution of wealth, formerly concentrated in the hands of the Chinese; English is taught as a subject, but many Malay students fail to gain sufficient command of it to read books in English, so that university courses depend very heavily upon the circulation of lecture notes translated into Malay by professional translators. The top commercial and industrial jobs in Malaysia nevertheless still demand a command of English. As a result, Malaysia spends a great deal of money on an élitist programme of sending some favoured pupils abroad - to England, America, Singapore or Australia - for their education. These Malays then form a very privileged middle class in their own country. Educational planning in terms of supposed national needs is notoriously difficult, and the claims made from time to time that Britain's export trade with EC countries would be greatly facilitated by the compulsory study of a second language by all children have not only to be substantiated (as against the alternative of training small numbers to a high pitch of effectiveness) but must be set against the possibility of wasted time, wasted resources and boredom in increasingly hard-pressed schools. It is worth remembering that Britain has a long and strong tradition of <u>wholly vernacular education for the majority of pupils</u>; that timetables are crowded; that teaching a second language for just a few hours a week when the child has no

other contact with it is very often a waste of time if one is aiming at a command of the language rather than some knowledge about it, and that there is something to be said for the Malaysian kind of solution in purely economic terms. We might close down most second-language programmes in this country as quite ineffectual and send small élites abroad for their education instead.

If one considers value for the individual, again many time-honoured claims must be looked at rather carefully. It is true that to learn the linguistic structure of a second language enhances one's understanding of the nature of the more universal properties of linguistic systems - but only if the teaching is done by somebody capable of drawing the illuminating references. Few language teachers have been trained to do so. It is true that to read the literature of another culture may enhance one's understanding of the properties of mankind and of human existence - but only if one has achieved a sufficient command of the language to penetrate the literature deeply. We get many students at York who are fugitives from the study of French or German literature, having been so badly taught at school; and most schoolchildren get nowhere near that command of a second language needed to read the literature with penetration and pleasure. They would do far better to read it in translation, as the virtually monolingual Shakespeare read Plutarch's Lives by courtesy of Lord North. It is perhaps true that everybody should benefit by having the opportunity to encounter cultures other than their own, although the effect is often to reinforce prejudice if the individual feels threatened by the alien culture; but there are many ways of penetrating other cultures, and although a knowledge of the language is an invaluable ancillary to most of these it is not always a sine qua non, while on the other hand a former member of the staff of the Language Teaching Centre at York who spoke fluently six languages used to comment sadly that he was illiterate in all six. I believe it to be true that some people become fluent in another language because by doing so they can express a persona in some way more satisfactory to them than that they can express in their first language; it may well be that language learning as an activity has a general therapeutic value for some people, and we find that our students in the Language Department at York tend to fall into three main groups, one of which is of those who simply enjoy learning new languages (the others being those who enjoy the more abstract aspects of linguistics, and those who become most interested in the social and psychological aspects of language; there is a fourth, small group who have primarily a historical, philological, probably etymological interest, and who are specially catered for). It is sometimes claimed that the need to translate forces one to re-examine one's own language, and so sharpens one's logic; but one can be trained through logic and through practical criticism directly to re-examine one's language - it does not have to depend upon the activity of translation, and a good deal of actual translation only blurs distinctions inherent in the original.

I have argued elsewhere that people create the patterns for their linguistic behaviour so as to resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time they wish to identify; and this general hypothesis (Le Page, 1980) is intended to apply to all language learning, including second language learning. This means that each individual is going to have his or her own reasons for learning or not learning, using or not using a particular form of language; but one's ability to carry out these acts of identity is constrained by factors which come under one of four heads: one's ability to identify groups as models; one's access to them, and ability to analyse their linguistic systems; one's motivation - usually complex, leading one to aversive as well as to imitative behaviour, or to partial distancing from the model; and one's ability to change one's behaviour - a factor usually related to age, though it may well be a complex of age and sex and past experience. In order to understand the responses of particular pupils to second language teaching it is necessary to have some understanding of the way these constraints may operate; the group or model will be different for each child, the degree of access different, the motivation different. But within such an understanding there is, it seems to me, great scope for teachers to undertake research with their pupils - always provided, I repeat, that they have had the appropriate training.

In short, I am doubtful whether there is a need for vast research programmes into the need for modern language teaching; I am arguing however that there is an urgent need for radical reform in teacher training to provide teachers with the skills which will enable them to understand far better both the social and psychological aspects of language learning (especially questions of motivation), the nature of linguistic systems and the way we as individuals create them and use them, and the relationship of that creation and use to the stereotypes we have about 'language', 'languages', 'good language speakers' and 'correct use'.

A good, thorough training in sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and linguistics should be a major part of the professional equipment of every language teacher (whether first, second or any other language). Our close contacts with a number of schools to which we send our York students in their second year to study various kinds of linguistic deprivation continue to leave me appalled at the sheer ignorance of most teachers in these areas. Language teachers continue to be far too obsessed with getting on the latest pedagogical bandwagon; they are not equipped to make dispassionate appraisals for themselves of claims made, nor to make dispassionate appraisals of the motives and potential of individual students, who may want very different things from a language course. The teachers of different languages - including English at one end of the spectrum, French and German in the middle, and Punjabi or Bengali or Finnish or Modern Greek at the other end - often seem unable or at least unwilling to collaborate in common language awareness programmes so as

to maximise limited resources and time available for good language work. There is much better collaboration across the syllabus in some primary schools.

If teachers were equipped to sit down and think about their students as individuals within the framework of values I have mentioned above - if they would use their new training, their experience, their own classrooms and their natural powers of observation to face facts rather than to rationalise what they would wish to be true - if they would collaborate across disciplines - then it might be possible to reach a collective understanding of how to make the most of our social situation and what it offers in terms both of vocational value and of cultural enlargement for our students, and to fit language learning and learning about language into that understanding. But how do we manage to change teacher training? There's certainly scope for action-directed research there.

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4. Research and the teacher of foreign languages in secondary schools

Brian Page

My brief is 'to bring out teachers' views of what blocks the progress they are trying to make towards better teaching/learning, what they want to know more about in the area of L2 learning.'

What teachers feel blocks progress is frequently a complex of political, financial, organisational and sociological issues which are not perhaps what we want to discuss here. But we must be aware of them and keep them constantly in mind when we are deciding whatever courses of action we eventually wish to take. Otherwise all our deliberations here will be so much hot air and will as quickly disperse.

At a general political level all teachers, and language teachers among them, need encouragement. It is a long time since morale in the profession was as low as it is now. It is disheartening, for example, that 'comprehensive school' has become for so many people a pejorative term, a situation that appears to be encouraged rather than otherwise by our current political masters. More specifically, the study of language needs encouragement by being placed firmly in any core curriculum envisaged. It has not helped matters that in the current hiving off of sections of educational responsibility to the Manpower Services Commission's Youth Training Scheme and into new structures like Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI), all of which are supposed to be concerned with 'relevance' and 'the real world', the study of foreign languages plays virtually no part. It is to be hoped that the curriculum suggestions that will come from the revised version of the DES consultative paper on foreign languages in the school curriculum (Department of Education and Science/Welsh Office, 1983) will express a good deal more strongly a policy of positive encouragement to teach more languages to more people than the document does at present: and this for two pressing reasons that can produce two suggestions for research. First, the range of languages being taught in secondary schools in this country is contracting. It is very probable than within a very few years now there will be virtually no Russian or Italian taught at this level. The Schools Council has already investigated this problem (Schools Council, 1982). It still needs to be taken further. What precisely are the factors that have led to this situation? What are the courses of action that could redress it? Why are those courses of action not being pursued? Second, at present, nationally (though there are strong pockets of resistance, particularly where graded objectives schemes are in operation), two-thirds of our

secondary school pupils give up foreign language learning at the earliest opportunity, that is at the public examinations option year, typically, at age 14+. There are many reasons for this. What are they? How can the situation be improved? If the situation is improved, are the authorities at local and national level willing to solve the organisational problems that arise? Quite simply, if we manage to persuade two-thirds of our pupils to continue learning a language after age 14+, that would mean we would need a lot more language teachers, textbooks, materials, etc. Would that situation be welcomed and dealt with? If not, there is no point in our trying. I know already of schools where pupils who would like to go on learning languages have to be told they cannot because there are not enough teachers to teach them.

Language teachers could do with encouragement from society at large too. We know why many people feel that learning a foreign language is not really a worthwhile activity - the fact that English is an international language is apparent enough. But there is surely more to it than that. We should take a lead from our mathematics colleagues. They have managed to persuade society in general that everyone needs a full-scale secondary school mathematics course. Most jobs seem to require a qualification in English and maths when we all know that the great mass of the population, including most of us here, needs no more than the ordinary computational skills that we learnt in primary schools. I am not suggesting that maths should be downgraded - it has a general educational value - but it has been sold to everyone on its utilitarian value. A knowledge of one or more foreign languages is at least as useful as secondary school mathematics. How do we convince people of that?

One final point about the encouragement of teachers. Because of a dramatically falling school population as well as lack of money, career prospects are blocked. It has been estimated for the city of Leeds that, by the year 2000, 85% of teachers will still be in precisely the same job as they are now. Over the next fifteen years or so only 15% are likely to move because of retirement, redeployment or promotion. This is discouraging, particularly at a time when reforms are needed. What can be done about it?

To get to matters to do more directly with language teaching/learning: why is it that most of our learners appear to perform so modestly after something like 500 hours of instruction? Are the objectives wrong? Are the methods wrong? Are the teachers generally poor? Are the conditions wrong? Or is language learning so complex and difficult a business that what our current pupils do is in fact all that can be expected?

1. **Are the objectives wrong?**

As far as behaviour, performance or skills to be acquired are

concerned, most current 'O' level and CSE syllabuses either do not state any objectives at all or couch them in language so general that it is meaningless. Graded objectives schemes, on the other hand, have always defined fairly precisely what a learner at a given level should be able to do. These definitions are usually in terms of a task and not in terms of the level of linguistic complexity which may be displayed within the completion of the task. This is an area which needs investigation. Some definitions of objectives in terms of the body of knowledge to be acquired, that is, words and structures to be known, have existed since the beginning of CSE in 1964 and they have proliferated in the past few years. There is a current controversy that if really communicative objectives are to be aimed at, then a syllabus defining vocabulary and grammar will be more of a straitjacket than a crutch (Page, 1983). We have enough experience now of both types of definition for an investigation to be made. How can we best define a syllabus to encourage communicative competence?

2. **Are the methods wrong?**

I am quite sure that there is not a method which, irrespective of other circumstances, is more likely than others to bring about effective learning. David Wilkins pointed out years ago (Wilkins, 1974) that we all know teachers who appear to succeed in turning out successful language learners by methods we would sharply criticise. Many of us are survivors of the gradus ad Parnassum approach described by John Trim (Trim, 1980), so we can hardly say that that was unsuccessful. It would seem, therefore, that in any methodology there will be elements which are more desirable than others. Can these be isolated? Is a successful methodology above all one in which the teacher herself profoundly believes? Is it one which is more teacher-directed or more student-centred? Are there categories of learner that can be described by ability (however that is to be measured), age, social class, or whatever for whom a different mix of methodological elements is appropriate? It would seem so - after all, one does not present material to an infant class and an adult class in the same way. I would guess too that there are different learning problems involved for a middle-class child going to Leeds Grammar School and for another child a couple of miles away across the city, going to an inner city high school in an area where the unemployment rate is probably about 25% (and more if you are black, which many of the pupils will be). Yet proponents of particular methods, from the Direct Method through the Audio-Lingual Method up to current approaches like the Silent Way, always seem to present a monolithic system.

3. **Are the teachers poor?**

We would expect that it is through their judgement that teachers can gauge what methods work best. Or can they? Or can they be trained

to? We should remember at this point just how much British secondary school teachers do. The British average work load of 30 lessons a week plus departmental and other meetings, parents' evenings, pastoral care, school journeys, stamp clubs, choir and so on is higher, often much higher, than in most other countries, and particularly than in schools in western Europe. We will not get much improvement in teaching/learning and in teacher education until that is recognised. But how do you convince anyone that our secondary school teachers are being required to work too hard so that most have little time or energy for self-improvement?

We must remember also, however shocking it might be for us, that the majority of teachers do not read books on professional matters, they do not read articles, they are not members of the language associations and therefore do not go to branch meetings or receive the journals. They must be reached through massive and compulsory in-service training programmes. And those programmes should first concern themselves with what an outsider sees that teachers need. Every parent knows what researchers in the last few years have been finding out - that communication in the classroom is an extraordinary and chancy business. The implied conventions and the expected behaviours are often very curious and difficult to learn. This sort of knowledge is only just beginning to get through to teachers in general and needs to be collected for language teachers in particular. The old question-and-answer routine is a good example. Just what is happening when a teacher asks a question in a foreign language classroom? It is clear from my experience as a teaching practice supervisor that teachers' questions have, as often as not, a dampening rather than an encouraging effect. Yet language teaching depends heavily upon them. Studies in York and Stirling have begun to observe teacher behaviour in language classrooms. We need more of this, but we need more studies of pupil behaviour too.

Have we, in fact, concentrated too much on the teacher to the detriment of the learner? Much work has been done, in the teaching of English as a foreign language, on learner-centred schemes. Methods like the Silent Way and Community Language Learning shift the responsibility on to the learner to do his or her own finding out instead of sitting there having material presented to him/her. Very little has been done about this in foreign language learning in this country. It is significant that when the York group (Language Teaching Research Project, Language Teaching Centre, University of York) wanted to find out about successful language teaching they went, not to look at successful learners, but to look at 'good' teachers. These were defined as those who were considered good by HMI and advisers. The consideration of the assessment of the pupils of these teachers was abandoned at an early stage in the investigation so we never found out if the 'good' teachers produced good learners. It is not surprising therefore to discover that all the teachers in the study appear to be involved in highly teacher-directed forms of

teaching. Yet is this the best way? Is there not room and should there not be room, as a general educational objective, for pupils to decide for themselves, at least in part, what they will learn or how they will learn it, or at least to be encouraged to express their own meanings rather than have words constantly put into their mouths by closed-ended questions? That is something we should perhaps attempt to find out. I would hope that, in finding out, we would arrive at elements of a methodology which could be applied by the ordinary teacher, the usual one. I get rather impatient when confronted in the literature by methods which can only be followed by the 'good' teacher who, by definition, is in a minority.

4. Are the conditions wrong?

Is it realistic to hope to teach a foreign language for 40 minutes a day when the rest of the 24 hours militates against its acquisition as a communicative instrument - the situation that Eric Hawkins has described on many occasions as 'gardening in a gale'? There has been for some years now discussion over the counter-claims of the 'drip-feed' technique of a lesson a day versus intensive courses. In fact, the 40-minute lesson five times a week, which was traditional a few years ago when the secondary school curriculum was much narrower than it is now, has frequently given way these days to a nominal four periods of 35 minutes, often organised as two doubles of 70 minutes each. Many schools have experimented with intensive courses of one sort or another, the best known being Archbishop Michael Ramsey School, Camberwell (Cross, 1981). That research needs to be replicated and expanded to see to what extent a different sort of timetable arrangement for foreign language learning is feasible in schools and how effective it can be in producing good learners.

Two recent documents, Recommended statement of the GCE and CSE Boards' Joint Council for 16+ national criteria and the DES consultative paper Foreign languages in the school curriculum, contain several matters that are worthy of research. I wish to mention only three which appear to be the most important.

In the context of the recent discussion of the possible amalgamation of CSE and 'O' level, the Secretary of State required from the examination boards statements of national criteria for the new examinations. The Working Party for French set up by the examination boards produced first a set of draft criteria. These were made available to all interested parties; individual teachers, schools, language associations and others were encouraged to submit comments. A questionnaire was also sent to all secondary schools. On the basis of this a final report, the Recommended statement of 16+ national criteria (in National Congress on Languages in Education, 1984, p 106-15), was sent to the Secretary of State. Like all documents which try to express a consensus it has some muddy, ambiguous parts and some apparently contradictory parts but it remains extremely important as

it is the only expression of the collective will of the foreign language teaching community in this country. Such an exercise has never been done before and it is unlikely to be repeated for a long time. By its nature it is concerned with aims and objectives, syllabus definition and assessment and it is in these areas that it raises questions needing investigation. The first of the seven aims given for the school course up to age 16+ is: 'to develop the ability to use French effectively for purposes of practical communication'. In the context of foreign language secondary school teaching that has a meaning that is fairly obvious - pupils are taught to make appropriate utterances in given communicative situations rather than to translate La plume de ma tante. On the other hand it does beg all the questions about what communication is and how it is developed/taught/learnt. If we look at communication, as David Wilkins does in his paper, then it becomes very alarming because, as he says, 'the process is staggering in its complexity'. We all then wonder how on earth we are to teach it. And yet people of the meanest intelligence in the poorest conditions manage to acquire communicative competence, and not only in one but in several languages. It is as natural as walking, to the human race as a whole. It cannot then be all that difficult to do, however difficult it may be to describe. In terms of research, therefore, we should spend less time in describing what the process of communication is and more in finding out what enables it to take place, that is, how do successful language learners arrive at their success? But in that area we tend to look for the all-embracing theory - Krashen's being the latest as Steven McDonough points out in his paper. This seems to me a blind alley. So far, all theories of learning in general and language learning in particular which attempt to give a total explanation have been found to be deficient. Moreover, a theory of learning that does not take into account the fact that, for example, the subject is 13, male, has come breakfastless from a cold home and is likely to face long-term unemployment in a couple of years' time, is of little use in today's secondary school. It is for this reason that I would disagree with Vivian Cook's remark (in a short paper circulated to conference participants) that progress can be made only 'when it is based on a coherent accurate picture of L2 learning'. There seems to be no evidence, and I certainly have no belief, that we shall ever have a coherent and accurate picture of L2 learning. We should concentrate less on chasing the Holy Grail of the universal constant and more on the description of cases of successful learning, trying to describe all the observable elements in those cases, so that teachers can take from them the ones that seem best to fit their own purpose and situation.

In testing the Recommended statement raises problems which are well known and which still need investigation; in particular, criterion-referencing. How is one to define criteria and how decide when a criterion has been satisfied? Is it possible to say that there are levels of performance in satisfying a criterion, or is that contra-

dictory? On what grounds, apart from arbitrary intuition, does one establish a hierarchy of criteria so that a progression can be made from one to the next? What is the relationship between the sets of criteria we have in Graded Objectives schemes for example, relating mainly to language functions, and a grammatical progression? Can a communicatively valid grammatical progression be described? There exists a vast amount of material in Graded Objectives schemes that could yield most interesting evidence if they were the basis for a research project. If there is a tension between teaching and learning communicative competence, then that between acquiring it and testing it is enormous. Nevertheless, how is communicative competence best tested? And how is it to be tested in ways that reflect effective teaching/learning but do not lead to distorting practices in language classrooms?

The DES document is a consultative paper and I want to pick up only one point from it because it has not been expressed in quite this form elsewhere. Paragraph 8 states: 'For many pupils [and here the rest of the paragraph shows the DES is thinking of less able ones, not those going on for further training], theirs [i.e. the schools'] is the limited but important task of providing a foundation for language learning competence.' Here, then, it is not communicative competence in a given language that is the goal, but the teaching of a general language learning skill that can be applied to any language. How is that done? Does learning one foreign language do it? Or is it better to learn smatterings of two or three? Does that have implications for two-language courses leading to two-language qualifications, that is, a CSE or 'O' level in French and German together rather than separately? If we have two-language degrees why can we not have two-language qualifications at lower levels, including 'A' level? Learning how to learn a language is something that needs investigation, since it applies to all school pupils and not only to the least able.

I would however emphasise that the priority of research should fall not on the quest for an elusive objective truth but on the collection and description of what appears to work in some cases - descriptions of successful learners, successful teachers and successful methodological elements - so that teachers' own behaviours may be illuminated. Moreover it is of limited use to describe these things only once. A collection of case studies from Stirling (such as Rosamond Mitchell has already given us) will scarcely percolate through to Yorkshire. We need to set up such methodological study groups in each area so that local collections of effective approaches are made. Teachers must be involved at these local as well as at national levels. If teachers could be led to analyse their own behaviour, they would soon require change from themselves and others. This has been the lesson of the Graded Objectives schemes - that is what teachers did and their conversion was rapid and dramatic. It was an enormous consciousness-raising exercise and that,

above all, is what we need first, otherwise teachers will just not be receptive to any new knowledge that research might discover. If research results are to be disseminated and trusted, they must start where teachers are, in classrooms, and they must involve teachers from the start, in the experimental design, in the collection of data, in the interpretation of that data. Then teachers themselves will begin to see the methodological, organisational and other implications. Without that teacher involvement I do not think we will get very far at all.

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MAJOR RESEARCH AREAS

5. Communication processes: what do second language learners need to be able to do?

David Wilkins

Introduction

This paper is devoted largely to an informal account of the process of communication. It is informal because, unfortunately, communication theorists, sociologists, psycholinguists, discourse analysts and others do not take the same view of what communication processes actually are. There is no authoritative account to be taken off the shelf. It is drawn from a variety of sources: psycholinguistic accounts of sentence production and reading, models of language constructed by linguistic theorists, studies of interpersonal language behaviour and investigations of the role of pragmatics in communication. The account is broadly psycholinguistic in the sense that whatever is done in behaviour is assumed to originate in mental activities in which the factors described have played a role. No attempt is made to describe the temporal, sequential or causal relations among these factors, nor could such an attempt be made. The mental activities are loosely referred to as processes, but the term is used atheoretically and here includes what might elsewhere be referred to as plans and strategies. It is assumed that the term communication applies not only to face-to-face spoken interaction but also to such activities as reading and listening.

Production and comprehension

We can begin our attempt to describe the process of communication by giving a partial account of the operations involved in speech production. We will assume that conversational use of language is involved. An act of speech must begin from the existence of some kind of intention on the part of the speaker. That intention may be to perform one or more speech acts designed to have an impact on the person addressed. Most speech acts also demand the expression of one or more propositions. Planning the speech act involves deciding (though rarely consciously) both what is to be said (and done) and how it is to be said. While the planning logically precedes the execution, the two are rarely distinguishable as distinct stages and indeed the exact relation between them is not clear. It is likely that the utterance is begun before all of the content has been decided. Certainly the form of the utterance is unlikely to have been fully determined. Both the content and the form depend upon the speaker's appreciation of the situation and this may be subject to constant adjustment even as the utterance proceeds. This adjustment

will be made in the light of the feedback provided both by the speaker's continuing monitoring of his own performance and by his perception of the interlocutor's reactions. With regard to the content, the appropriateness of the speech act to the relationship with the interlocutor (or indeed as a suitable response to a speech act performed by the interlocutor previously) must be judged. The speaker must assess what presuppositions are shared with the hearer, what knowledge, values, beliefs can be taken for granted. Similarly, where situational factors are relevant, the speaker must judge how far the relevance to the message of such factors is self-evident. Broadly he has to determine how much of what he wishes to be communicated has to be made explicit and how much may be left unsaid. In deciding this he will know that a certain degree of redundancy may help communication, but that otherwise economy, brevity and simplicity may render what he has to say more accessible. His sensitivity to the situation will tell him whether, in selecting forms, there are important contextual variables to take into account. What is his social relationship with the person addressed? Is the situation formal or informal? What degree of politeness should be attained? Are there linguistic conventions to be observed given the topic or domain of the language use? Does the fact that this is a spoken rather than a written interaction require that syntactic and lexical forms be chosen accordingly?

This brings us to the question of the form that the utterance will take. It is to be presumed that selection or at least consideration of the lexical forms takes place relatively early, since these are the major units of the meaning to be expressed. However there is no one sentence form to express a given content, so that considerable choice is available in how the relations between the lexical items may be conveyed. Once again many considerations operate, though again rarely consciously. The utterance form (simplistically we will assume that sentences are the units of informal speech) will not be occurring in either linguistic or contextual isolation. The relation with previous utterances will demand the use of anaphoric devices and may permit considerable ellipsis. Semantic relators may be used to make explicit the semantic relations within the text. Even lexical choice may be affected by the previously used lexical items. Ways of referring to the physical context may be needed on occasions. Given the content, the speaker has the choice of marking the illocutionary force of the utterance directly or of achieving the same effect indirectly. The utterance will need to show continuity with the topic of preceding utterances. At the same time the speaker will want to adopt an arrangement for the sentence and a distribution of intonation features which will give prominence to what is intended to receive greatest emphasis in what he has to say. It is unlikely that, other than for the shortest sentences, the entire sentence form is selected initially. Sentence structure is hierarchical; structures are embedded within other structures. The syntactic form of a complex message is probably built up phrasal unit by

phrasal unit. Within such units semantic and grammatical choices must be made affecting the form of individual words. Deictic factors will help determine decisions on tense and article choice. The semantics of the sentence will determine, say, the choice of modal verb. Syntactic relations may demand marking for concord or agreement. At this point the appropriate morphological forms must be selected. What is the correct case form for a noun which is subject of the sentence? What is the past tense form of the selected verb? Finally the phonological shape must be given to the words and this in turn can be interpreted phonetically and the appropriate messages sent to the speech organs for the utterance actually to be articulated.

The process is staggering in its complexity. We are many years away from even the most elementary understanding of the 'decisions' that have to be taken and the temporal and other relations between them. What is astonishing is that the speech act is performed with spontaneity and with effective synchronisation of all the decisions being made at the different levels. Conscious attention is rarely given to any but the higher level skills involved.

It might be supposed that the receiver's processes are a simple reversal of the productive processes. This is not the case in two important respects. First, neither the listener nor the reader is dependent on a strict decoding process. There is evidence that the listener does not first identify individual phonemes, then their combination into syllables, then identify the morphemes formed by syllables and so on up the grammatical hierarchy. The hearer has the competence to do this, but it is a set of procedures which is usually short-cut. The hearer has a great deal of relevant knowledge which enables him to make predictions at any point in the speaker's utterance, either exactly or within a limited range of probabilities, how the utterance will continue. His syntactic competence, given the linear character of speech, contributes significantly to this. Certain forms are so highly predictable as to be virtually redundant. However, the hearer also brings to bear a great deal that is non-linguistic. The very topic increases the likelihood of certain (lexical) forms occurring. The hearer has an enormous store of knowledge which may assist his predictions. There may be features of the physical context which are relevant to the content of the speech. The speaker and the hearer share experience and presuppositions. There may be discourse patterns which constrain the range of things which may occur. In other words, there are many information sources available to the hearer, such that in the communication situation overall there is a great deal of redundancy. The hearer's short-cut is to be constantly building up expectations in the light of this information and to scan rather than decode the utterance so as to retrieve just enough information from the form of the utterance to confirm or correct the prediction. The redundancy in the situation means that fully accurate perception of the signal is not essential for communication.

Mention of the diverse information sources (frames) available to the hearer brings us to the second way in which reception and production differ. The message which is transmitted from speaker to listener is not in practice a well-defined entity. That is to say, what is transmitted is not like a parcel which the receiver has simply to unwrap in order to gain access to the set of meanings which the speaker put into the parcel in the first place. The hearer has to interpret the speaker's intentions and relate these to his own perceptions and frames of reference. In practice the speaker's intentions operate at an indeterminate number of levels. We may think that at least the meaning conveyed by the lexical and syntactic features of a sentence is understood by a simple process of linguistic decoding, but even here contextual information may be necessary to resolve ambiguities or imprecisions. Much else that the speaker expects to convey is recoverable only through inferencing processes. The illocutionary force of an utterance has usually to be established in this way. What is more, it seems that an utterance may commonly have several different, compatible illocutionary forces at the same time. Further, the utterance may be performed with an ill-defined phatic purpose or may be intended simultaneously to communicate attitudes, values or psychological states. This means that there is no finite "meaning" to be grasped by the receiver. What the hearer must do is relate the utterance to a frame of reference which is judged to be that which has been presupposed by the speaker. What is understood must match the speaker's intentions to a significant degree, otherwise communication will not have taken place successfully. But some difference of interpretation is inevitable and, perhaps, legitimate. The hearer may not attach the same significance to what the speaker has said as the speaker himself. It is not incorporated into his frame of reference in the same way. Where the Language event is of a highly interactive kind, there is the possibility of continual verification so as to ensure that serious miscomprehension is avoided.

Second Language

The processes that have been sketched assume the participants to be fully competent speakers of the Language. The characteristic of individuals using a second Language is that they do not fully possess that competence. Second Language users are likely to bring to the act of communication intentions which are not radically different from those of the native speaker and a familiarity with the role of pragmatic factors in communication which derives from their first language competence. In all other respects they are likely to be significantly different from the native speaker. First, their lexical and syntactic competence will be markedly more restricted. Secondly, they are unlikely to have the perception and judgement of social situations and relations to recognise the social appropriateness of different forms of Language behaviour. Thirdly, the absence of shared cultural experience with native speakers means that they

will be operating with different frames of reference. All of these deficiencies may lead to breakdown in communicative behaviour. While incomplete command of the language system will lead to use of interlanguage forms, many of the resulting formal deviations from native language use may not be insuperable obstacles to communication. Lexical deficiency and lack of capacity for syntactic elaboration will impose a far more serious restriction on the communicative repertoire. Unfamiliarity with social norms will lead to sociolinguistic solecisms, which may not have significant material effect on communication. The lack of suitable frames of reference will handicap the individual's interpretive skill and lead to misunderstanding and confusion in deducing what is meant from what is said. The effect of these deficiencies upon communicative capacity will vary according to the nature of the language activity. The restricted syntactic range will seriously limit the speaker's expressive capacity. The speaker will find that he cannot say what he would like to say. On the other hand it will have a less serious impact upon his reading skill because, as we have seen, accurate linguistic decoding can to some extent be by-passed in receptive activities. In this sense reading can be expected to become a communicatively useful skill far more rapidly than, say, speaking. To balance this it should be said that the deficiencies in cultural experience are likely to have their most serious effect on listening and reading, particularly in instances where interpretation is heavily dependent on the receiver's knowledge.

It is plausible to assume that the individual's own perception of the source of his communicative difficulties will focus primarily on the inadequacy of his syntactic and lexical competence. How far and by what means he has coped with these difficulties will be revealed by his communicative behaviour. Broadly speaking, first, he may adjust the nature of the message. The message may be changed or reduced to meet the linguistic resources available. If this is not feasible a message begun might have to be abandoned or a topic avoided altogether. In contrast to these solutions he may try and remedy the deficiency in the resources available while maintaining the intention to communicate the message in full. This could be achieved by such devices as borrowing from the first language, code switching, word-coinage or even the use of non-linguistic resources. Even so, breakdown in communication, which occurs even in native-speaker interaction, must be anticipated with some frequency where a second-language speaker is involved. Being able to handle repair of breakdown may prove to be an important ability in a non-native speaker. A native speaker engaged in an interaction with a non-native speaker will be expected to assist in the repair and indeed to adjust his language behaviour to accommodate the non-native interlocutor whether or not this goes as far as the use of foreigner-talk.

Issues

Even a more elaborate account of communication processes than has been provided above would reveal a large number of gaps in our knowledge. If we hold that in the long term it would be the aim of an educational policy for languages to bring the communicative skills as close as possible to those described, then we need to fill those gaps in our understanding that are particularly significant for a second-language user. Our knowledge of communication processes will then enable us to set reasonable aims which in turn will have important implications for the teaching and learning process. Suggestions are made in the remainder of the paper regarding major issues which demand further investigation by means of empirical or other forms of research.

1. There is an almost total lack of accurate information about the current levels of communicative skill among learners of second or foreign languages. There is need for a substantial programme of descriptive studies to remedy this deficiency.

    1a. As a corollary to this, we also need to develop adequate tools for describing or measuring communicative skills.

2. The processes outlined above are those that characterise the mature and competent speaker. The learner exposed to the language within an educational institution cannot be expected to reach that level of skill. Is it possible to establish interim targets and in what terms could they be defined?

    2a. This gives rise to a number of subsidiary questions. Would it be a legitimate solution to devote learning wholly to mastery of the language system so as to create a <u>latent</u> competence that could be made communicative if suitable conditions occurred at a future date?

    2b. Alternatively, would it be best to achieve a realistic limitation of aims by seeking to meet only a restricted set of communicative needs even if this left gaps in the linguistic competence?

    2c. Are there specific changes in priorities that could be adopted to facilitate communicative behaviour, such as the acquisition of a far more substantial vocabulary than is commonly the case?

3. What is the relative impact of the different kinds of deficiency mentioned on the communicative effectiveness of the individual?

    3a. Is it possible to quantify the impact of different types of error or their combination on comprehension?

3b. What types and quantities of phonological error have serious effects on intelligibility?

4. Does the description or analysis of communicative processes have immediate implications for teaching and learning? In particular, should activities intended to promote learning mirror the ultimate target skills? For example, do the processes followed by a highly skilled reader provide evidence against teaching reading by breaking it down into what are supposedly component skills?

5. Will the communicative competence of second language learners be improved if they are taught strategies to overcome or by-pass their difficulties? Is there a case for practising paraphrase, interlingual or intralingual transfer, word-coinage and so on? Are there devices for improving repair? Should learners be shown how to gain specific forms of linguistic assistance from an interlocutor?

6. Should language teaching set out to draw the learner's attention away from the lower-level language skills (where errors may have little impact on communication and where they may disappear of their own accord given sufficient opportunity for use of the language), so as to concentrate their attention on higher-level planning? Is automation of those skills better ensured by intensive attention to them or distraction from them?

7. Is it possible or necessary to train second language learners in inferencing skills?

8. What implications are there for the role and professionalism of the language teacher in our understanding of the nature of communication?

8a. Is the teacher's traditional preoccupation with the language system still valid, albeit extended to incorporate such features as discourse patterns, sociolinguistic variation and illocution?

8b. Should the teacher become a skilled animator of communicative activities providing opportunities for integrated use of language?

8c. Is it the language teacher's role to provide the experience and knowledge of the second language culture which enables the learner to acquire relevant frames of reference?

6. Language learning and acquisition processes: how can and do people learn?

Steven McDonough

It is natural enough to ask how people learn foreign languages. However, the recent history of the attempts to answer the question have shown, if nothing else, that we need to be quite careful about knowing why we want to know, what kind of answers will satisfy those reasons, how we can find out, and what use the anwers could be put to.

Theories of learning, like theories of most complex phenomena, tend to use analogy and metaphor, making specific predictions and then hoping to test the predictions against behavioural data. However, in the field of second and foreign language development there have been, in relatively quick succession, a number of theoretical advances which have not been elaborated fully enough to check their internal validity, and consequently have not received crucial tests. It is not surprising, therefore, that the field is in some degree of turmoil and that the relation between theory and the practice of teaching is in some ways a strained one. In a way there are too many theories; a practitioner could find it too easy to discover some theoretical justification for particular teaching decisions without having compelling reasons to reject others.

Hence my plea for the need for care: we should decide if the psychological information about learning processes is to be used to suggest new techniques of teaching or to understand how techniques in use actually work. Tempting as it is to claim that the first of these should be the goal, I do not think that this is in practice what should happen. Techniques of teaching and learning are more numerous than theories of psychology; techniques derived from theory are rarely new. It is quite possible to 'discover' techniques from a theory of second language acquisition only to find that it is what teachers have been doing for some time. This is a danger which Krashen and Terrell's The natural approach (1983) seems to court with insouciance, with its suggestions for planned communicative activities. However, theoretical understanding of the processes can and does sharpen our ideas of what existing techniques imply, how they can be combined, and what likely results they may have.

The title of this paper includes a small puzzle which I will leave aired but unsolved. What a learner does is presumably only a small part of what he or she can do. The learner can learn in a variety of ways; most learners only use a selection of these to complete the

task set. For example, they may adopt conscious learning strategies like vocabulary list learning; grammar-book-style layout of the 'principal parts' of verbs etc; or concentrate on free practice as much as possible; or try to make sense of the vocabulary through the morphology or even the history of the words; or write out examples repetitively; or learn chunks of texts by heart; or just let the constant sound of the language around them wash into them, as it were. However, some of these ways may be more efficient or productive than others: one task of second language learning research is to compare them and make recommendations. In this paper I shall be more concerned with how learners <u>can</u> learn; what they actually <u>do</u> must depend on constraints of situation, task, resources, and individual preference.

During the latter part of this century there have been five main answers to the question in the title, and I shall organise the rest of this paper around the five, spending most of the time on the more recent. I shall then try to indicate some problems which, as a practising language teacher, I find these theories help me to understand, and also some where I find they do not touch and where new research should be initiated. The five have been:

1. practice
2. problem-solving
3. creative construction
4. monitoring
5. personality development.

Perhaps the oldest of these answers is the belief that <u>practice</u> at speaking and hearing the language in a strictly planned manner leads to mastery of the structures of the language. The audio-lingual and audio-visual theorists borrowed the results of earlier psychological work by E Thorndike and C L Hull and argued that 'drilling' produced learning by raising the response strength of particular language habits. Response strength was increased by the frequency of reinforcement for the particular bond between stimulus and correct response. The whole theoretical apparatus was neatly destroyed by W Rivers in 1964, using evidence both from within psychology (that, for example, learning takes place even in rats without reward) and from within language teaching (that, for example, pattern drills did nothing for the affective demands of the pupils). This was not to say that nobody learnt languages by the audio-lingual method, but that the explanation given for their learning was at best incomplete and at worst simply wrong.

In the 1960s and 1970s there was a resurgence of interest in the

ideas of problem-solving and concept attainment as a possible clue to language learning. Several authorities (e.g. Chastain (1971), Dakin (1973)) argued that languages were learned at school age and above not by a mindless process of stamping in patterns but by a conscious inductive process of rule formulation and elimination of disconfirmed hypotheses. Interestingly this post-dated Chomsky's (1965) rejection of the concept attainment explanation of native-language acquisition, and therefore registered a clear division between those who believed that first and second language development were in principle the same and those who did not. Chomsky had two arguments against the concept attainment theory. Firstly, most versions of it require the use of negative information; that is, examples of what the concept is not, to constrain hypothesis-testing, and there is no evidence of children deliberately producing wrong examples for testing purposes. Secondly, he argued that the language the child is exposed to is too full of false starts, disguised grammatical distinctions and so on, for the child to be able to isolate what is significant to base a concept on without some kind of inbuilt prior knowledge.

However, Chastain's version of the problem-solving idea emphasised conscious mastery of given rules before their application to fluent performance. Thus, it was open to Carroll's rather laconic description of cognitive code as 'updated grammar translation'. Dakin's use of concept attainment also adapted the ideas of discovery learning (originally proposed by Kersh and Wittrock (1962) as a motivational adaptation of stimulus-response theory). His statement of what he called 'cognitive' method contained two important assumptions. The first was that learners consciously try to make sense of language data by formulating a rule of thumb to explain it to themselves and help them remember the general principle. He proposed that the language data could be so ordered by the teachers as to control the kinds of hypothesis the learner will invent and reject. That people can do this - both the arrangement and the hypothesis testing - is true, but whether they would naturally do it for language learning is debatable. However, the whole edifice of error analysis is built round this principle of hypothesis testing. His second assumption was that having learned to perform correctly according to these 'rules' there would be a change, and that with time, exercise and familiarity, learners would become proficient speakers who would perform 'as if' according to the rules, but not using the rules consciously. In other words, rule-governed fluency would become something akin to Sprachgefühl rather than a conscious process - and might therefore feel to the speaker like a first language. Unfortunately, although there is a certain amount of corroborating evidence for this process of integration and smooth, unconscious running of consciously learned operations in the skill acquisition literature (Welford, 1968), there has been no direct test of it in the language learning context.

The first two models were oriented very much to the management of

teaching in relatively formal situations. The next one was set up to account for the performance of children who had developed a partial proficiency in English as a second language in relatively informal situations like the community, the street, and the playground, as well as, for some of them, English as a second language classes.

The creative construction process was suggested originally by Dulay and Burt (1974) as an explanation for the appearance of what looked like a 'natural order' of acquisition of 11 grammatical morphemes of English. In that cross-sectional study, there appeared to be patterns of priority in which no child could get a plural in -s correct (e.g. cats) if he could not get pronoun case (he/him) right, and no child could do the irregular past tenses without being able to do those two. In fact the morphemes fell into three groups. Similar data has been presented by numerous authors and reviewed by Krashen in 1977 (reprinted in Krashen (1982), p 13), who has tried to extract an 'average natural order' from a large number of studies. The studies have used a variety of methods ranging from a picture and question test (Dulay and Burt - the Bilingual Syntax Measure), writing tests (Larsen-Freeman, 1975), oral production (Fathman, 1975 - SLOPE test), to multiple-choice questions and cloze procedure. This last, by Hyltenstam (1977), used a different method of analysis as well, which was sensitive to variable performance in the sense of the sociolinguist's variable rules, and found an 'implicational hierarchy' for learners' attempts to master negative placement in Swedish. The nature of the creative construction process itself has, however, not been widely explored, as it seems to be considered sufficient to assume that it is the re-activation of the process by which the first language is acquired, and this was assumed to be Chomsky's 'Language Acquisition Device'. The similarity between the orders of acquisition of grammatical morphemes is not total, and differs between testing method with second language learners and between learners of the same language as a first and a second language. It is therefore possible that, at least in the second language case, an observed order of appearance is the result of some 'natural' order of difficulty in the language or of some exigencies of the exposure to the language received by the learner.

The currently most popular theory of second language development, the Monitor Model of S Krashen, attempts to resolve many of these issues in a theory consisting of five basic assumptions. The most detailed account of his theory is contained in Krashen (1982). The five basic assumptions are:

1. learning is distinct from acquisition
2. the Natural Order hypothesis
3. the Monitor hypothesis

4. the Input hypothesis

5. the Affective Filter hypothesis.

The claim that language learning and language acquisition are distinct processes is probably the least controversial of these hypotheses. Many teachers have believed for years that school-age pupils can learn in a different way from young children learning their first language. Where Krashen differs from both this view and the 'creative construction' process view is in his idea that both processes are available for second language learners. For him, the processes are distinct because acquisition leads to intuitions of grammatical correctness while learning leads to rule-formulation. In a sense he accepts both the arguments of the cognitivists and those of Dulay and Burt and others, but wishes to keep their roles separate in a two-factor theory. He cannot, of course, accept the view that rule formulation by hypothesis-testing can lead to performance without conscious manipulation of the rules, as assumed by Dakin, because that would nullify the sharp distinction he finds it necessary to draw. Acquisition is a result of a creative construction of grammars from exposure to the language; learning can only take place in 'formal' learning contexts where there is rule isolation by syllabus and feedback to the student on his success. The argument is that in most teaching contexts elements of both formal and informal teaching are present. As has been pointed out by many critics, notably McLaughlin (1978), a crucial distinction which rests only on the conscious/unconscious dichotomy is, however, unverifiable: how can we ever know whether learners are operating by rule (conscious) or by feel (unconscious)? It may be that they 'feel' a particular sentence is wrong, but also know the rule, having forgotten the correct formulation of it. A pertinent analogy would be the crossword enthusiast who gets the answer to some clue before being able to work out exactly why it is the answer - but his mind might have gone through the argument 'unconsciously'!

The arguments put forward about the Natural Order hypothesis are precisely those surrounding the creative construction hypothesis mentioned earlier. Natural orders result from acquisition; 'unnatural' orders, like those found by Larsen-Freeman (1975) in writing tasks, but not so labelled by her, are deemed the result of the interference of learned rules, because of focus on accuracy and time for second thoughts. This variability is used as evidence for the Monitor hypothesis discussed below, but we should note that there needs to be independent evidence for the Monitor before it can be used, in turn, as a viable explanation for the variability of orders of appearance or difficulty. Apart from this variability of orders of acquisition, the assumption of the creative construction process is made more dubious by the almost complete lack of specification of what actually occurs. It is assumed that first language acquisition processes are re-activated, but there is no statement of

what these may be, and the first language research field is itself in turmoil currently with no clear and powerful theory emerging. The most powerful arguments against the existence of natural hierarchies were brought by Rosansky (1977), but these seem to have been overridden in the general enthusiasm.

The Monitor hypothesis - that 'learning' contributes a consciously constructed set of rules about the 'easy bits' of language, which can only act as an output filter on the predictions of the unconsciously acquired language system - is more controversial still. Not because the process of monitoring is not familiar: in one sense we do it all the time when speaking (experiments with delayed auditory feedback have shown that hearing your own voice through earphones about a tenth of a second after you have spoken rather than instantaneously, as normal, leads to nearly total breakdown of the ability to control speech, because the immediate feedback necessary for fine tuning is interfered with), and in another we often encourage our students to check what they have written and review what they are saying for considerations of formal accuracy; but because of Krashen's insistence that the learned system is always restricted to a monitoring role, and is never an initiator of utterances, and that learned knowledge can never 'seep' into the unconscious acquired system. 'Seepage' cannot be allowed in the theory because it obviously destroys assumption 1, but it is a familiar phenomenon from introspective reports of language learning (Cohen and Hosenfeld (1981), particularly on vocabulary learning strategies). Krashen's Monitor raises several questions, therefore, on which further research is very much needed. The question of seepage is theoretically important because of the 'cognitive' explanation of the Sprachgefühl problem mentioned above, and because at least one authority (Stevick, 1980, ch. 21) has pointed out both anecdotal and empirically tested reasons why something of the sort must occur. The question of monitoring being a 'natural' process in the sense that Piaget's Formal Operations stage of cognitive development is a perfectly 'natural' process, while its effect according to Krashen is to interfere with the 'natural' acquisition of language, is important. The question of whether monitoring is dependent on teachers' explicit or implicit training of students' learning strategies needs investigation. A fourth question is whether monitoring is just one of a number of learning strategies, as suggested by Bialystok (1979). In fact, none of these questions can be answered without a much richer conception of 'learning' and 'monitoring' than Krashen has yet provided.

The Input hypothesis is the claim that students' acquisition processes work only on 'comprehensible input'. The idea is in effect borrowed from the first language acquisition field, one part of which has been concerned with the adaptation of parents' language when talking to their children so as to use structures, vocabulary and ways of expression which are 'roughly tuned' for the child's

presumed level of competence. Of course, if the tuning goes awry, the channel of communication breaks down. In the second language case, it suggests two important principles. Firstly, acquisition is dependent on the 'quality' of the available input, i.e. how well the teacher and other suppliers of language can use the initially rather narrow band of language which the learners can understand, while also introducing some elements which are just beyond them. Studies of classroom discourse have been looking at this question for many years, and disappointingly have not yet produced any very powerful generalisations about the particular ground-rules and salient features of teacher-student talk which contribute to acquisition. Secondly, acquisition is dependent upon an initial 'silent period' and not on active performance in the language. Thus pattern drilling from day one never gave a chance for acquisition in Krashen's sense to take place. How this claim relates to the claim that it is only the acquisition system that can initiate utterances is not clear, except it is an odd refutation of the old principle - not unsupported in the literature - that one learns by doing.

In fact, it is definitely not clear that 'comprehensible input' is a function of the language exposure alone: the acquirers/learners also negotiate input for themselves. Meaning, after all, even for the young child, is negotiated between the child and its conversation partner. Topics have to be agreed upon - even with the child taking the lead. Tarone (1980) has pointed out that there are communication strategies, production strategies, and learning strategies, and that they are not all the same thing. She has also pointed out that not all communication strategies are also learning strategies, and many learning strategies do not involve communication - like private study of word lists: she states that (p 421) only further research can sort out the muddle. Long (1983) also reminds us that learners expend considerable effort in trying to control what is said to them and how it is said, by eliciting re-phrasing, repetitions, simplifications, etc. This strengthens the claim that the quality of input is important, but weakens the idea that it only affects the unconscious acquisition process - my learners know what they are doing when they ask for clarification, as do Cohen and Hosenfeld's. Indeed, they also know when my talk ceases to be of any help to them, and have ways of dealing with me!

The fifth principle in Krashen's theory is the Affective Filter. This is essentially Earl Stevick's (1976) idea that there are defensive and receptive learners. Receptive learners do not have to learn/acquire as if through a barrier; defensive learners find the learning situation threatening and try to keep it at arm's length. Stevick's position on that was related to a 'whole person' view of education: people who found learning a new language threatening to their ego, their perception of themselves, would be literally on the defensive. While it is obviously an attractive notion, and relates to the concepts of empathy and ego-permeability (Henning, 1978) as

features of individual differences in learning, it is not clear how it relates to Krashen's other hypotheses. In particular, it is claimed to work only on input to the acquired system (1982, p 32), so that comprehensible input is used in a low anxiety situation, but there seems absolutely no reason for this restriction at all. Why shouldn't anxiety level in students also affect their conscious rule learning and the use of the Monitor? Especially the use of the Monitor?

The five hypotheses comprising the Monitor Model are currently, despite the criticisms and points which demand further research, the best elaborated theory of second language development we have. However, they do not seem to say very much about the movement towards 'humanistic' methods in language teaching (Stevick, 1980, and British Council, 1982), especially where those trends seem to involve the fifth of my major analogies of the language learning process this century. The idea of language learning's being more akin to personality development than to learning maths or geography or riding a bicycle has been popular in a minority for some time, promoted by Stevick in particular. The analogy involved is, of course, that between the teacher/pupil relationship and the therapist/client relationship. This is naturally a very deep issue, and several approaches have been sensibly rejected on the simple grounds that there is no single therapist/client relationship. However, Smith (1980) has an interesting chapter on learning in groups which seems to echo many of the claims of this minority group of language learning theorists. In particular, he stresses three processes which contribute to recognised personality change in therapy groups of various sorts: 1. security; 2. challenge; 3. self-disclosure.

Naturally, 3 is unlikely to occur profitably without 1, and 2 will be unsuccessful in promoting growth or learning without a background of 1. The relationship of self-disclosure to language learning is exploited in Moskowitz (1982). This field of thinking seems to aim at more than just Krashen's 'affective filter', since it argues that language learning is more than a kind of automatic skill acquisition but an extension and adaptation of the learner's personality. It is of course a strong position to hold, and is not supported by detailed research equivalent to the amount of work published on grammatical morphemes; but it has serious implications for affective and motivational variables in learning as well as for the kinds of teacher/pupil discourse that are productive and can be used for learning.

These theoretical models have all stimulated direct research in language learning, and as such have proved very useful. In some cases research has led to modifications of the theory, in others it has led to practical teaching suggestions. Some of the issues in a practical teaching situation, therefore, are very much clearer now than they were ten or fifteen years ago. For example, the importance

of the learner's own strategies for processing language for learning, as in Bialystok and Fröhlich's (1977) adaptation of Monitor theory, is now widely recognised. Similarly, the learner's strategies for getting language as discussed by Wong-Fillmore (1976), Tarone and Long could be seen in terms of Krashen's Input hypothesis as the learner's attempts to ensure that the language he/she pays attention to is as nearly comprehensible as he/she can manage. As a teacher I find this line of research particularly valuable as it seems to be a fruitful extension of this rather lonely search by the teacher for his or her own best 'teacher talk' from which the students can learn with maximum ease. The humanistic model promises some understanding of the dynamics of support and challenge in the classroom and this is more accessible to teachers as an idea than older conceptions of motivation by incentives and fear of failure: carrots and sticks. Despite the difficulty of translating those insights into classroom terms, which is very much a task for further research, they represent a fairly powerful resource which teachers need to be exploiting all the time. The individual difference research which has arisen out of other motivational enquiries and has been incorporated into the ideas of variable use of the 'monitor' and of the variable 'affective filter' gives a refreshing set of terms in which to discuss learners' variable achievement. Finally, despite what I have said earlier about the 'creative construction' idea, it at least represents an attempt to model a process which most teachers feels exists without being able to formulate it or to produce crucial evidence: the process by which the general level of proficiency of a learner seems to rise independently of the particular sequence of learning activities or items-to-be-learned presented by the course-book or teacher.

However, there seem to me to be several areas of psychological interest in the language classroom which are not treated by the theoretical approaches I have outlined. First among these is the experience which I see my learners having every year, without being able to explain it or even describe it properly. That is the 'take-off point', the point at which a learner seems to shift from learning (and forgetting) items of language in series to integrating all of what he or she remembers into an effective communicative instrument. It is the stage at which the learner feels confident, also, to embark upon a fruitful conversation. None of the theoretical approaches mentioned can specify the likely time-course of the developmental process, let alone the shape of the learning curve.

Another issue which is sorely in need of both empirical research and a proper theoretical treatment is the question of the relationship between language awareness in general and language learning. There is a distinct possibility that having a sensitivity to and a curiosity about language and how it works is a helpful attribute when learning a new one. Were it the case, then it might be advisable to try to develop it as part of the content of language teaching, as

indeed happens today in several of the language awareness courses conducted in schools. However, the theoretical approaches reviewed either reject such considerations out of hand or raise them, like Chastain's approach, to a level of conscious rule-writing which is equally inappropriate.

Thirdly, none of the approaches mentioned says anything very powerful about the transition between contexts of learning and contexts of use. This is a very old question - it used to be called transfer of training - and yet there is very little new psychological research on it. This is itself surprising, given that within the Language teaching profession this question has stimulated a great deal of syllabus and materials development, particularly under the heading of 'languages for specific purposes'. A number of reasonable assumptions exist in that rather broad field about the proper relationship between learning tasks and the eventual context of language use, but their psychological implications remain largely untested.

In this paper I have tried to outline at a rather general level what seem to me to be the five main theoretical approaches to second language development currently under discussion. I have also tried to indicate which points in each are particularly controversial and which seem most in need of further clarifying research. I have also expressed my concern that, in at least three major areas, very practical questions which teachers have to consider for every course are given almost no illumination by these psychological theories and their associated empirical work. It should be evidence that each of the analogies employed - the rat, the information-processing device, the first language learner, the censor, and the therapist - falls short of providing a satisfactory account of the many-faceted activity of learning another language in the various contexts in which people do learn languages: alone, in the speech community, in the regular classroom, in a small group, or in an intensive course. New analogies will provide fresh impetus for understanding the basic processes.

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7. Language learning in education: what research should be done to help improve learning?

Rosamond Mitchell

INTRODUCTION

Other papers prepared for this conference consider needs for empirical research to support the further development of our theoretical understandings of the nature of linguistic competence, more especially of communicative competence, and of the psychological processes of L2 acquisition. This paper sets out to argue a related but somewhat different case: that attempts to apply current theoretical understandings of what language is, and how it is 'naturally' learned, to the process of L2 instruction in classrooms, also require the underpinning of empirical research.

Classrooms are complex social environments with their own role relationships and rules for behaviour; this makes the uptake of almost any innovation a problematic business. But because of their wide divergence from traditional goals and practices of L2 teaching in the British educational system, the adoption of 'communicative competence' as the goal of L2 teaching, and the acceptance of learning theories emphasising the importance of unconscious acquisition through active involvement in target language use, present a special challenge for the British L2 classroom. The appropriacy of goals deriving from linguistic theories to the ideologies, aspirations and competences of teachers and pupils: the feasibility in classroom settings of theory-derived instructional procedures: and the effectiveness of these procedures, in terms of their impact on pupil outcomes (attitudes and L2 attainment) - none can be taken for granted, and all merit research attention, in the quest to 'improve' classroom learning.

There has over the past few years been a significant positive response in Britain to current theoretical developments in sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, in terms of developmental initiatives in foreign language teaching and assessment. In spite of limited availability of resources, even for curriculum development, the 'grassroots' Graded Objectives in Modern Languages (GOML) movement has popularised new syllabuses and forms of assessment in many English local authority areas (Harding and others, 1980). The Scottish Central Committee on Modern Languages' French curriculum development project (now published as the Tour de France French course: Heinemann, 1981) and Lothian Region's Graded Levels of Achievement in Foreign Language Learning (GLAFLL) project (Clark, 1980), have popularised functional syllabuses and 'communicative'

methodology at secondary level in Scotland. A recent CILT publication (Lunt, ed, 1982) documents additional developmental responses in higher education and in teacher education.

These developmental initiatives have, however, been supported only to a limited extent by concurrent classroom-based research and/or evaluation studies. The funding by the Scottish Education Department, alongside the Tour de France project, of associated research into methodology (Parkinson and others, 1981; Mitchell and others, 1981), and also of an evaluation study (Parkinson and others, 1982), remains exceptional. The now defunct Schools Council did fund some surveys and reviews of aspects of the GOML movement (Buckby and others, 1981; Harrison, 1982; Utley and others, 1983); certain examinations boards have also sponsored GOML-associated research (e.g. Dunning, ed, 1983). But the total funded research effort in relation to current innovation in foreign language (FL) teaching in schools has been small; overall, we still know very little about the uptake at classroom level of the various developmental initiatives. Other L2 areas in British schools have, however, fared rather worse. English as a second language (ESL) has received little research attention; and within the area of minority community language teaching, only Welsh has so far received anything approaching consistent funding for research as well as developmental purposes (see e.g. Price, 1978). (For a summary account of other funded initiatives in relation to community languages, see National Congress on Languages in Education, 1982.)

(Very recently, there seems to have been some increase in funded research activity, at least in relation to foreign languages. However, for reasons beyond the control of the L2 specialists, this increase is concentrated in a single area: that of assessment and certification. There are several ongoing projects at present concerned with the assessment of L2 communicative proficiency, funded in England by individual examinations boards, in Scotland by the SED (see for example Kilborn and others, 1984). This activity in relation to assessment is welcome as far as it goes. However, it cannot compensate for the lack of consistent research support in relation to other dimensions of L2 learning in education.)

For the purposes of this paper, 'language learning' will be taken to include both conscious and unconscious learning and acquisition processes; 'education' to mean formal schooling. A very wide range of research studies might be considered relevant to the 'improvement' of processes and outcomes of teaching and learning in the L2 classroom. The main part of this paper will, however, discuss British research and research needs, in relation to a few key elements in the classroom situation. These elements are: the L2 teacher; instructional strategies and teacher-pupil interaction; and the L2 learner.

'TEACHERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE'

In educational research generally, the importance of the teacher as a key agent in promoting learning has been re-emphasised in recent years (see e.g. Good and others, 1975; Rutter and others, 1979), though precisely what effective teaching consists in remains unclear (see review of relevant British research by Kyriacou, 1983). Whether or not instruction 'makes a difference' as far as L2 learning is concerned has been a matter of debate elsewhere (see review by Long, 1982). This has never been a 'live' issue for foreign language teaching in Britain, however, as the classroom is the only setting in which languages such as French or German are regularly encountered by most British school-age children, and the teacher is the main or sole target-language speaker with whom they come in regular contact. Organised classroom instruction thus represents the only opportunity available to most young people for L2 learning, and the quality of that instruction is likely to be reflected fairly directly in levels of competence achieved. (For ESL or minority community language learning, the situation may of course be very different.)

Teacher talk

If we take seriously psycholinguistic theories which suggest that 'comprehensible input' is a key factor in L2 acquisition (Krashen, 1981, 1982), then the character of L2 talk by teachers is of the greatest interest. The 'teacher talk' of L2 classrooms has been studied elsewhere (e.g. Lightbown, 1983; Long, 1983). However, only a small beginning has been made so far to the detailed description of FL 'teacher talk' in British contexts (Mitchell, 1982, 1983, and 1985).

Teachers' FL proficiency

It is however known from several research studies that 'teacher talk' in L2, apart from 'syllabus speak', is most notable by its absence in many British FL classrooms (see next section). Most FL teachers in British schools are of course native speakers of English rather than of the target FL(s) they are teaching, and teachers' lack of personal oral fluency in the target language is sometimes suggested as a factor restricting FL use. However, the force of this explanation cannot be tested, in the absence of any studies of British teachers' proficiency in relevant FL registers. While investigation of teachers' target language competence would undoubtedly be a sensitive business, it would seem a useful preliminary to the development of any remedial action in pre- or in-service teacher education.

Teachers' views of learning and teaching

Another research area almost untouched in the British context con-

cerns teachers' understandings of L2 learning processes, and their beliefs about what constitutes effective instruction (cf Wagner, 1984). One Scottish survey of teachers committed to a 'communicative' approach to FL teaching suggested that teachers' willingness to adopt such an approach derived primarily from a concern to improve pupil motivation, through a commitment to communicative objectives which pupils and teachers perceived as relevant to presumed future needs (Mitchell, 1985). There was little indication that these teachers had accepted theories which stress unconscious acquisition as the primary process of L2 development (and consequently emphasise the provision of 'comprehensible input' as the main task of the L2 teacher). Instead they seemed to view conscious learning as primary. Many argued that analytic study of the 'rules' of the target language was central to the development of advanced, generative competence: many also argued that active correction of errors of form occurring in their pupils' FL output was an effective instructional procedure. Here is a case where teachers' accumulated 'craft knowledge' is in apparent contradiction with current L2 acquisition theory. Such 'craft knowledge' may itself be a source of useful hypotheses for empirical research investigation (Desforges and McNamara, 1979). In any case, advocates of innovation need to take it into account when proposing changes in classroom practice, however well-founded in psycholinguistic theory these may be.

Teacher expectations

Lastly, L2 teachers' expectations concerning their pupils also merit closer study. For example, the Scottish survey just referred to also suggested that some FL teachers still believe that a proportion of their pupils are not capable of developing any significant creative FL proficiency under current classroom conditions. The basis for this belief, and for differing expectations currently held regarding levels of communicative proficiency achievable more generally in classrooms, also merit investigation in any push to improve L2 learning in the education system.

CLASSROOM PROCESSES

Until recently, very little observational research had been conducted in British L2 classrooms. In the large-scale and influential evaluation study of French in the primary school, conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research, observation of classroom processes played only a minor role compared with the collection of attitudinal and achievement data (Burstall and others, 1974). Galton's (1978) review of systematic observation studies in British educational research refers to only one L2 study (Wragg, 1970), and Long's (1980) review of systematic and ethnographic observational studies locates only two more British studies. Lately however, some additional systematic studies have been reported, including Parkinson and others (1981); Mitchell and others (1981); Sanderson (1982);

and Lees (1983). (Delamont's (1976) exploratory study - of Latin teaching! - seems to be the only ethnographic study from a British L2 classroom.)

The systematic studies we now have are all small in scale, and the theoretical bases for the selection of variables for study from the total universe of classroom events have not always been derived from language-specific learning theories. Wragg's pioneering study applied Flanders' interaction analysis system almost unaltered to the FL classroom; and much more recently, Parkinson and others (1982) used an analysis scheme relevant to Bloom's general theory of classroom 'mastery learning' (Bloom, 1976), rather than to any particular psycholinguistic theory. However, in spite of their limitations, the existing British classroom studies are rich in interest for anyone concerned to improve L2 learning in schools, if only as a source of hypotheses for further investigation.

Use of L1 and L2

For example: the FL classroom studies (and an indirect study by Partington, 1981) concur in recording the persistence of English alongside the target FL, as a medium of classroom communication in British schools. They also suggest a degree of functional differentiation between languages, with the L1 being preferred for functions such as the giving of dense new information, and the FL (where it is used at all consistently for communicative purposes) being used largely for personal or instrumental functions. This tendency to reserve at least some key classroom communicative functions for L1 must be a culture-specific, and not a universal, phenomenon; it seems largely absent from the world of English as a foreign language, for example. It is of course a potential constraint on the provision of 'comprehensible L2 input' for pupils, and more generally on their involvement in L2-medium interaction; the reasons for it would have to be thoroughly investigated were immersion programmes, for example, ever seriously to be proposed as a means of improving L2 learning in British schools.

Simplification and repair strategies

Current classroom studies have also reported considerable variation between teachers in their apparent capacity to sustain FL use in classroom communication even for selected functions over extended periods. Mitchell (1983 and 1985) has suggested that teachers capable of sustaining FL use are effective users of a range of simplification and communication strategies similar to those noted by other researchers in 'mother talk' and 'foreigner talk' (see for example Snow and Ferguson, eds, 1977; Faerch and Kasper, 1980). This issue merits fuller investigation, however, as does the question of how such conversational strategies are acquired; can they, for example, be taught to other teachers?

Production or reception?

Another finding of interest for acquisition theory is teachers' apparently strong commitment to immediate FL production by their pupils. Mitchell and others (1981) noted the rarity of purely receptive activities in beginners' classrooms, and suggested that teachers might be requiring continual FL production at least partly as a mechanism for behavioural control, and a reassurance that learners were 'on task'. If an extended period of largely receptive experience of L2 were felt on psycholinguistic grounds to be desirable, ways of generating and managing this in classrooms while sustaining pupil involvement and attention would need investigation.

The foregoing paragraphs outline a few starting points for further research on classroom learning, starting from existing descriptive accounts of L2 classroom processes. The fuller application of discourse analysis techniques in future descriptive studies is likely to generate many more insights.

THE LEARNER

The British classroom research so far discussed is focused very largely on the teacher and on his/her instructional strategies. The classroom behaviour of the learner, linguistic and non-linguistic, typically appears only indirectly. In several studies, pupil attitudes and/or achievement have been investigated so that they could be used as yardsticks to assess the effectiveness of particular curriculum innovations (Burstall and others, 1974; Buckby and others, 1981; Parkinson and others, 1982). However, studies taking learner factors as matters worth exploring in their own right have been unusual in Britain. (Ganguly and Ormerod (1981) provide an example of such an attitudinal study in an ESL context; the ongoing large-scale study of pupils learning French being conducted by the APU has the assembly of achievement data as its primary purpose (Assessment of Performance Unit, 1980).)

Pupils' views on learning

There is thus a great deal more to be learned about L2 learners in our schools. Firstly, what are their motivations for L2 learning, and what do they see as desirable outcomes? Many current FL syllabuses and courses in use in schools claim to be based on an analysis of 'learners' needs'; but it seems in many cases that no-one has asked the learner directly about his/her goals. Regarding the process of learning itself: just as teachers' craft knowledge deserves to be taken seriously, so do pupils' views about what constitutes effective instruction and productive classroom learning experience. As well as the exploration of learner opinions through non-observational techniques such as questionnaires and interviews, direct classroom observation centring on the learning rather than

the teacher, and 'introspection' studies of children's ongoing learning strategies, could make varied contributions to the improvement of classroom instruction.

Developmental studies

But perhaps the most productive vein of learner-centred studies, from an 'improvement' perspective, might be a new wave of process-product studies. Not the broad 'method comparisons' which on the whole proved so disappointingly ambiguous in the 1960s and early 1970s, but small-scale, intensive studies designed to explore various aspects of L2 acquisition theory in classroom settings. In such studies, the development of learners' L2 proficiency in its various aspects (sociolinguistic competence and conversational strategies as well as structural mastery) might be followed closely and described in detail (using recordings of everyday L2 use in the classroom as well as specially elicited language data), over relatively extended periods of time. Process data on dimensions of the learner's classroom environment hypothesised to be critical in influencing L2 learning would be collected simultaneously, as might 'introspective' data on learning strategies. (Broad models for such studies might be found in L1 acquisition and developmental research, such as the longitudinal Bristol study (Wells, 1981).)

Such studies could yield data of the greatest interest on issues such as the relative importance of conscious learning and unconscious acquisition in classroom contexts; the existence of 'natural' L2 acquisition orders (as opposed to syllabus-derived orders); the 'learnability' of conversational strategies for turntaking, repair etc; the effectiveness or otherwise of active correction strategies; the usefulness of extended, purely receptive learning experiences; and the use learners make of different types of 'grammar explanations' and rehearsal activities. If linked to conscious and fully documented attempts to implement a range of innovative strategies inspired by psycholinguistic theory, such as 'silent way' or immersion programmes, the interest of such detailed developmental studies in terms of the confirmation/disconfirmation of psycholinguistic hypotheses would of course be increased.

CONCLUSION

The scope of this paper has necessarily been restricted. Firstly I have concentrated mainly on FL learning; however, other branches of L2 learning in British schools, notably ESL and minority community language learning, have equally valid claims for more consistent research attention. (For example, empirical investigation of the 'threshold level' and 'developmental interdependence' hypotheses advanced by Cummins (1979) could potentially lead to better informed policy-making for the education of bilingual children.)

Secondly, I have dealt with only the most central elements in the L2 classroom: teachers, pupils, and the relations between them. The contribution research might make to the 'improvement' of other factors in the total classroom situation, in the light of current hypotheses about the nature of language and L2 learning, also merits consideration. Syllabus design, materials development, and organisational patterns of instruction could all benefit from empirical investigation, perhaps most fruitfully combining research and developmental activity in a range of 'action research' studies (Cameron-Jones, 1983). The empirical validity of functional-notional syllabuses, the classroom exploitation of 'authentic' L2 materials, and the integration of direct contacts with the L2 speech community into formal instruction, are examples of possible areas for such studies.

Lastly, the question of research methods has not been discussed in any detail. However it will be obvious from the foregoing that a wide range of research techniques, drawn from mainstream educational research as well as from linguistics and psycholinguistics, may be appropriate for L2 classroom research. Systematic and participant observation, discourse analysis, action research, investigations of attitudes, ideologies and achievement, developmental and evaluation studies, will all have a part to play in developing British research activity from its present low base, to a level which can provide significant, continuing support for the development of the L2 classroom as a high-quality learning environment.

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WAYS FORWARD

8. Some key problems

Christopher Brumfit

My brief was to pick up the major points from discussion, and to explore the problems that emerged, in order to indicate directions for future action. In fact we had been exposed to a range of exciting papers, addressing issues which have great relevance to researchers, language teachers, methodologists and linguists. The opportunity to meet was welcome, and the exchange of views was, in all ways, a most valuable experience.

Perhaps it is inevitable that a conference which draws together people from a range of different interests and disciplines, and which expects them to look to the future while taking account of the past, should produce a sense of frustration and some talking at cross-purposes. But it is a little disappointing that discussion should have raised apparent conflicts of influences and interests.

What is clear is that many people feel the need to examine more carefully the process of foreign language learning in Britain, and are unable to do so with any rigour because either the time or the funding is not available. But much of our discussion foundered because different types of research and scholarship seemed to be rather unnecessarily competing against each other without any clear recognition of fundamental underlying differences in approaches and aims. Perhaps it may help to try to tease out some of the most significant strands in the discussion in order to isolate our major preoccupations.

Scholarship and research

A key theme in discussion from university and polytechnic teachers and researchers was that, whereas scholarship is possible with relatively little funding beyond what is available in libraries in the tertiary sector, empirical research often requires considerable time, administrative support, and equipment which are not easily available without funding. It is striking that the British contribution to scholarship, through influential hypothetico-deductive discussion and exciting speculation, in the field of second language acquisition and learning, has been considerable (we only have to think of the work of Corder, Widdowson and Wilkins, for example), whereas the systematic empirical exploitation and the validated implementation of these ideas has been found most fully in the United States or in other European countries. This unfortunate divide results in British researchers being stereotyped as anti-data, and unwilling to become involved with basic empirical, experimental and

descriptive work in this field. Yet the difficulty is far more one of funding than of principle. Most researchers in languages who enter academic life either start off with a strong literary bias (as discussed in John Trim's paper), or come to applied linguistic work via teaching. The latter group, by the time they have had enough teaching to understand the nature of language teaching and enough research training to understand the nature of research, are in their mid-to-late thirties, usually with family commitments. They are past the stage where they can be expected to attach themselves to someone else's research and live on a pittance, but they are uniquely equipped to contribute as researchers who genuinely understand the process of education. In most education or applied linguistics departments in the tertiary sector scholarship can be pursued in such time as is left over from the (higher than average) teaching duties. But systematic and serious empirical work cannot be pursued without time being bought. This is where the squeeze on university funding shows itself most rapidly.

At the same time, applied linguists who do become researchers have to progress as best they can, lurching from short-term contract to short-term contract at an age when colleagues in other sectors usually have reached a more stable position. Figure 1 on p 73 illustrates this aspect of the career structure of applied linguists.

Now of course all these issues are part of a much wider problem than research in second language learning. But it is advisable for our specific problems to be seen within the broader context. Not only do we receive the bad effects of current policies in a form more severe than many colleagues do, but we have to live with the paradox that British speculation is internationally admired in this field as being the most fruitful source of valuable hypotheses, at the same time as British empirical work in the same area is almost non-existent compared with that in other countries.

Different types of research

'Research' appeared to mean many different things at the conference, and it seems reasonable to distinguish a number of different types. All of these are desirable forms of research, and all need support, but they require different kinds of support, and different types of people performing them.

a) Policy-orientated research: Much NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) work seems to be in this category. It is concerned with monitoring the effects of current policies in education, providing feedback to policy-makers in order to enable them to make more informed decisions. The purpose is to find out what is happening, but the prime intention is not to question underlying theory, though such questioning may indirectly result from such research.

b) 'Truth-seeking' research: This 'pure' research will be concerned with the most important current questions in key disciplines for education - psychology, sociology, linguistics, or any other that may be seen to be relevant. Such research may have very direct implications for teaching, as much psycholinguistic work has, but the questions being addressed will have a higher level of generality than the specific needs of particular classrooms. Nonetheless, work under this heading, like that of Gordon Wells at Bristol, has a strong influence on the teaching profession through teacher education, and the formation of pedagogical theory. Without such research we are dependent either on borrowing from work in (e.g.) mother tongue acquisition, as with Wells' work, or on borrowing from overseas in different social and historical contexts. There is virtually no fundamental work on second language acquisition being carried out on any scale in Britain.

c) Action research: This is research specifically aimed at a particular situation, without a prime concern with replicability or generalisation except in its own local circumstances. Often its aim is educational for the teachers who are researching as much as it is evaluating or information-gathering. There is no doubt that such research is valuable, and that support should be given for (e.g.) curriculum development projects to monitor themselves, and for teachers to explore more sensitively the interaction that surrounds them in class.

These three types of research influence each other, and some research projects may well be hybrids which do not fit neatly into a single category. Nonetheless, they do represent different research aims, and it is not helpful to imply that research can or should be of only one of these types, or that one type is performing the role of another.

We should also distinguish between training researchers and performing research. The traditional method of training researchers outside the sciences has been by means of a research thesis, at either master's or doctorate level. But such methods are in many ways more appropriate for scholarship than research, being individual rather than team activities, limited to a few years, and often lacking strong administrative or technical support. We certainly cannot say that because there are doctorate students around, therefore research can be performed. And, compared with North America particularly, there are very few doctorate students in this field - again a matter of funding.

Individual research versus project research

Most of the areas in second language education that we know little about require projects rather than small-scale activity by an indiv-

idual. An example is the unique opportunity posed by the Bristol mother-tongue acquisition subjects who are about to enter secondary school. We have here a richer source of data on first language acquisition than has ever been available before, and these pupils are about to start learning foreign languages in the school system for the first time. The chance to monitor their progress, and to explore the relationship between their mother-tongue experience and their second language acquisition must not be missed. But such a study cannot be done on a shoestring, or in the gaps between teaching a range of courses on a more or less full-time basis. Similarly, the monitoring of attitudes and attainments of second language learners, matched against teaching styles, school types and pupil characteristics, that would be so valuable to enable us to explore the relevance of many current methodological fashions, cannot be confronted without a number of researchers and support facilities.

What is clear, then, is that there are a number of fields of activity of interest to different types of researcher. Much of my discussion so far has been concerned with distinguishing between these different activities, and indicating some of the problems with fundamental research which aims to discover what generalisations can be made about the language acquisition process as it relates to second languages. It is perhaps true to say that policy-orientated research will usually have less difficulty with funding than other types. If governments and local authorities want to evaluate their own policies, they have means to provide funds for doing that. We may well feel that language figures lower in priorities for such bodies than it should - but that is a policy rather than a research argument, and demands a different forum. Action research, and curriculum development research, have more difficult tasks to face. It is true that the Schools Council provided support for such work in schools, but higher education has not been so generously treated. It was clear in our discussions that there were problems in obtaining funding for projects of curriculum development in further education, universities and polytechnics. This is particularly worrying as a great deal of innovatory work goes on in languages in such institutions, but there is less opportunity for monitoring and for exchange of ideas than is desirable. To some extent this may be a matter of expertise. University and polytechnic lecturers in modern languages will not normally have any expertise in curriculum development - or indeed in educational research methods at all. Neither linguistic nor literary research training will help pedagogical research, and support for coherent development of improved teaching methods at these levels requires liaison with education or applied linguistics departments. This is not simply a matter of how best to improve the teaching of particular language(s); it also leads to questions which are being addressed at school level, such as the relationship between language awareness - knowing <u>about</u> language - and progress in particular languages. Consequently, dissemination of information becomes increasingly important, and not simply dissemination within one sector of the education system.

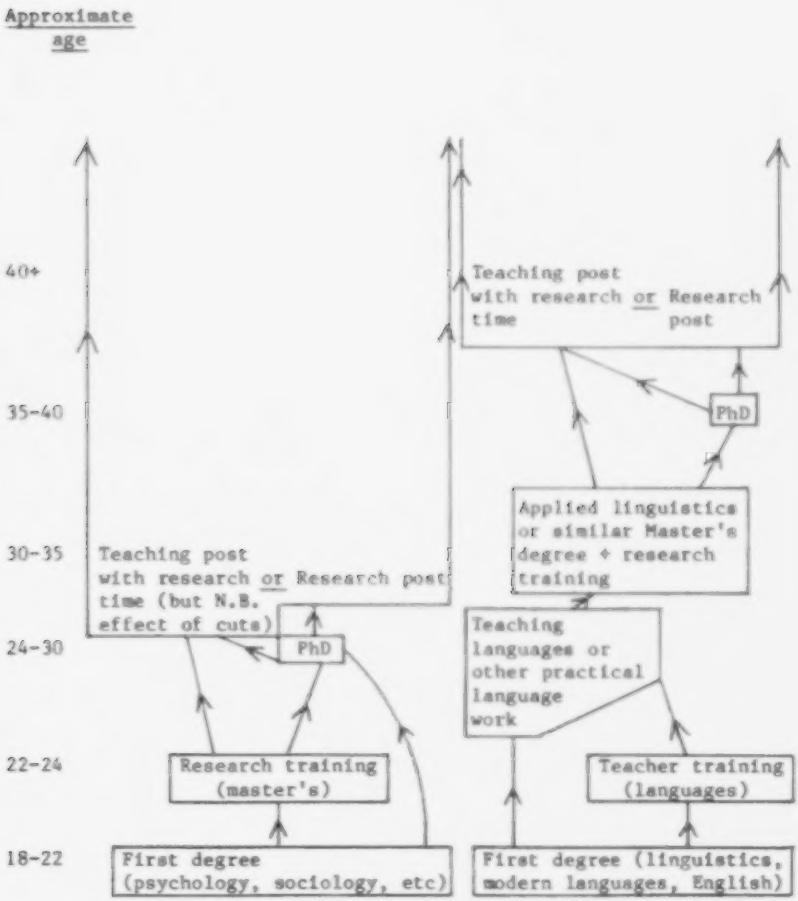
I hope I have adequately summarised the views of participants in the conference in such a way as to show that there was widespread concern, both about the need for us to be nationally committed to second language acquisition and learning, and about the inadequacy of our present capacity to understand what we are doing in this area. We are working hard, teaching, developing teaching materials, training teachers, and so on, but the time to examine carefully and systematically what is being done simply is not available. The result is general frustration in the profession, and no doubt less efficient teaching overall.

It is easy to argue that we have had enough research, and that the problems are largely practical ones to be solved in day-to-day activity by practitioners. But the difficulty is that the demand for teaching materials greatly exceeds the supply. Much expertise in English as a foreign language is being adapted by teachers of foreign languages in Britain, but we need to be careful not to assume that what holds for English taught in Europe or Africa by English-speaking teachers applies also to French in Britain taught by non-native speakers of French. Without as clear an idea as possible of the nature of language acquisition and language teaching options - in general terms - it is impossible to start evaluating the effectiveness of our activities as teachers. Without policy research it is impossible to make informed criticisms of decisions taken on our behalf by administrators and politicians. Without action research, teachers will be alienated from interest in questions of principle, and pure researchers will lack feedback. With inadequate support in all three of these areas, the blind may not be leading the blind, but the deaf will certainly be leading the dumb.

FIGURE 1

SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF ROUTES TO RESEARCH POSTS IN LANGUAGE-RELATED AREAS

C J Brumfit



83

9. Discussions in summary

Contributions made in the different sessions are summarised here (though too briefly to do justice to some). They do not represent a consensus, but points generally agreed are included here.

1. The present situation in the United Kingdom

- Links between modern language teachers and applied linguistics are tenuous. Little work in applied linguistics is done by modern language specialists; modern linguists do carry out some studies of language learning and teaching, but tend to by-pass the contributions of applied linguistics. Of the very few projects mounted in modern language learning/teaching, most are self-financing, and therefore small-scale, whether carried out by students or by academic staff. Inevitably, many able people turn to areas that either have funding or have less need of funding. Research is done on a shoestring budget. Projects that are underfinanced and understaffed are unlikely to advance our understanding substantially, or to help develop the identifiable community of research workers that is needed.

- There is a great difference between what could be done and what is done in Britain in L2 learning. In a state-of-the art survey of, e.g., interlanguage research, one would find remarkably few references to work done here, despite the seminal work of S Pit Corder at Edinburgh and later work done there.

- Expertise can and will be generated if those already able to tackle important and interesting problems do so, and if postgraduate education in this field is allowed and encouraged to develop as it should.

- In our multilingual society (Britain, Europe) there is no longer any question of deliberately restricting access to second/foreign languages; we need to make provision for all to learn additional languages effectively. Researchers should accept and respond to this target.

2. Problems of research in L2 learning

- Since language and language learning are areas of study, not disciplines in themselves, investigators inevitably - and fortun-

ately - come from various research traditions. They may, therefore, have difficulty in understanding each other's problems, formulations and contributions; this is a problem requiring special attention and sensitivity. Those from an arts/humanities background are often unused to working in teams, so those setting up multidisciplinary teams for studies of language learning need to make explicit provision for development of mutual understanding and establishment of a common approach.

- Practical problems for interdisciplinary work also need attention - for example, the difficulty of persuading library staff to stock journals in subject areas for which the university has no department.

3. Needed research

The following kinds and areas of work were specially mentioned as being those in which more research should be carried out. The suggestions reported in Papers 1-8 are not repeated here, unless they were stressed in discussion.

In many of these fields, results of work already carried out are insufficiently known, and so inadequately exploited. Dissemination of relevant research findings should be further developed.

Theory

- Well-founded theories of linguistic competence, language use, productive and receptive processes and of language acquisition and learning, are essential as a basis for empirical work.

Description

- The nature of first language competence: the base from which we learn another language. (Mother tongue, community language and foreign language are interlocking components of an individual's language competence, and need to be investigated in relation to each other.)

- More information (similar to that obtained for English by the Survey of English Usage) on spoken and written use of all major target languages.

- Studies of second language use, and of the speech behaviour of bilinguals - e.g. bilinguals' reaction times in their two languages as compared with the reaction times of monolinguals.

Language development

- What kind of language (performance) to expect of particular kinds of learner, at particular ages/stages of learning.

- Learner-based studies: how/why people learn languages successfully.

- Learning to learn a language: can students be taught to learn?

- Longitudinal studies of language learning: the 'natural order' of acquisition; acquisition of communicative strategies; acquisition of discourse features, including study of typological differences between languages and their effects on acquisition processes, and of different social needs and purposes.

- Language loss in the learner.

Teaching and learning

- The relationship between teaching and learning: is what learners learn just a subset of what is taught? Or is it related to the sum total of available input in a more complex way? The respective roles of planned and spontaneous language activities.

- Teaching of language awareness: can learners' proficiency be increased by the teaching of language awareness?

- New information technologies - their impact on language needs, and ways of exploiting technological developments for language learning.

- 'Graded objectives' work as developed recently in the United Kingdom should be examined for aspects that are of research interest.

Bilingualism and education

- On English as a second language: with perhaps ½M learners in Britain, more should be done than simply curriculum development; the relationship between first and second languages should be investigated in this social context, including comparisons between acquiring second languages and standard dialects.

- Language maintenance in ethnic minorities.

- On bilingual education, we need United Kingdom-based research, not simply assertions about its benefits.

- In general, synchronic comparisons of classrooms in different settings (across teachers, types of learner, languages, types of school, etc), as well as longitudinal studies of classroom language learning, are desperately needed to enable us to examine, in a principled way, the impact of basic research upon classroom practice. The work at Stirling provides a start in this area.

4. Teachers and their relation to research

- Many teachers see language as a skills subject; as such, it demands thought and an intellectually rigorous approach. Transfer of meanings is intellectually demanding. There is ample scope for teachers to use insights gained from research.

- Insights from linguistics will percolate to teaching if they are conveyed to future teachers in their first degree courses. Development of first degree and postgraduate courses is important; teachers need improved understanding of language, and knowledge of their particular language(s) within that framework.

- Secondment of teachers to research assistantships may be helpful in providing suitable personnel for particular projects, and in developing teachers' ability and willingness to be receptive to research findings, while pursuing their career as teachers.

- 'Solutions' provided by researchers are not teachers' own solutions - their relevance to classrooms may be slight, or may not be evident to teachers. Ways must be found of bringing together expert researchers and expert teachers, and of enabling them sometimes to be the same people.

- Dissemination should be built into research from the start. Researchers should find out who is interested in their work, and make information available as they go. Research itself is often consciousness-raising.

- Materials writing may be a way of taking new research insights direct to classrooms.

- Researchers should be prepared to consider the applications of their work, even though the work itself may be academic in nature.

- Developmental research (on teaching methods etc) may yield sufficiently good models of teachers and learners for experimental research to be done later; lack of knowledge of teachers and learners at present inhibits controlled experimental research.

5. Facts and figures of language learning

- Little information is available, none on some areas, e.g. English as a second language (how many are learning? how are they learning?). Such statistical information as is available must naturally be presented and used with great care, but this is not in itself a reason for choosing not to make it available. Figures change daily, and so are difficult to capture, but the need remains. Such information bases as do exist should be made more widely known.

6. Surveys of research

- The papers prepared for the conference were necessarily short, and addressed to a particular audience on the particular subjects requested by CILT. Numerous fuller and, usually, more specific surveys of research have been published in recent years, notably those commissioned by CILT and the British Council, and published regularly in Language Teaching: the international abstracting journal for language teachers and applied linguists (Cambridge University Press, quarterly). These surveys are republished periodically as collections; those published to date are entitled Language teaching and linguistics: surveys (CUP, 1978) and Cambridge Language Teaching Surveys 1 and 2 (CUP, 1982). Attention is drawn to these surveys (and to the abstracts in the same journal) as an important source of information on research in particular subject areas, which frequently indicate further areas in which work is needed, and always contribute to a firm base for planning future work.

7. Funding of and facilities for higher degree study

- A small informal enquiry made by CILT at Dr Brumfit's suggestion, immediately before the conference, had indicated that higher degree students in the area of foreign language learning (education, applied linguistics) were predominantly self-financing. Their advanced study and research was often carried out at the cost of considerable hardship, as one correspondent pointed out. One must surmise that some, possibly many, potential researchers were unable to acquire even basic training in this field of work, because of the apparent paucity of awards available. Part-time study/research provided a solution for some, who were able to take advantage of the provision for part-time study at Birkbeck College; at institutions providing principally for full-time study, though, part-time students were sometimes reported to make slow or unsatisfactory progress; their other commitments, which might include a full-time job, often did not allow them to give regular, substantial amounts of time to their degree work.

- Extension of facilities for part-time postgraduate study/research, and for funding of such study by awards from public funds, was recommended. It was suggested that ESRC consider extending its experimental scheme of 'part awards' to education.

- The awards available from public funds for full-time postgraduate study and research in linguistics, applied linguistics, socio- and psycholinguistics should be clearly publicised in the relevant documents circulated to students.

8. Funding of research projects

- Difficulty in obtaining funding for the UK part of proposed international projects was reported.

- Much work in the area of language learning is interdisciplinary by its nature. It risks, therefore, falling between the disciplinary boundaries of funding bodies, who should be sensitive to this problem.

- So far as possible, research funding bodies should make available to potential researchers, especially to those with relatively little experience, the criteria that research proposals must satisfy. This would not only save time for overloaded panels and officials, but would also help applicants to clarify their thinking at an early stage - even in cases where an award cannot be made.

9. Planning and presenting research proposals

- A guide to designing language research projects, presenting various procedures, with examples, was proposed.

WHERE NEXT?

Need for closer consideration of particular areas of investigation, by smaller groups

Participants were generally agreed that the conference had performed a useful function in opening up discussion of this important area, and in bringing researchers with different disciplinary backgrounds into dialogue. What was now required was a closer examination of a number of the fields which had been shown to be of importance for the understanding of the processes of language acquisition, learning and use. Such discussion would best be carried out by small working parties bringing different disciplinary insights and developing a common approach and mutual understanding on the basis of close working relations. It is hoped that the findings of a number of such working parties would help to clarify and structure this complex field, and be of use to bodies responsible for its promotion and funding, as well as stimulating individuals and institutions engaged in research.

APPENDICES

83.911

Appendix I

Recent and current research in Britain

Sarah Death

PART 1: SELECTED ENTRIES FROM CILT RESEARCH REGISTER (BRITAIN), 1978-84

The information about research projects set out here is extracted from the Research Register maintained by CILT. It has been collected at various dates from 1978 to 1984; the institutions named are those in which the work was/is being carried out (they are not necessarily the current (1985) addresses of the researchers named).

The Register contains information about work in several European countries; it is at present an unpublished typescript, held by 12 centres/libraries in Britain and by centres in the other participating countries. The British section has been published in three editions: Language and language teaching: current research in Britain 1975-77 (Longman, 1978) was the third. It is now being prepared for publication in its fourth edition by CILT in 1986.

Information on these projects is set out only very briefly here; fuller details of these and other projects may be obtained direct from CILT. (Enquirers are asked to quote the project entry numbers given below). Where work is known to have been completed, this is noted.

As the register contains only information specially provided for it by researchers, this should not be taken as a comprehensive list of recent and current work. Details of additional projects are welcomed at any time.

1135
V J Cook, Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex: Research into first language acquisition relevant to second language teaching. To investigate the use of elicited imitation as a means of testing linguistic competence; word association and other aspects of vocabulary. Begun 1971. Some results published: details obtainable from CILT.

1169
Professor Judith M Greene, Faculty of Social Sciences, Open University: Application of the concept of deep structure to the teaching of second languages. To explore the possibility that second language

learning could profitably be modelled on recent studies of first language acquisition. Begun 1971.

1220
Dr J Morton, MRC Applied Psychology Unit, Cambridge: Development of models for language behaviour. To elaborate a functional psychological model for the processes involved in all forms of language behaviour. Begun 1959. Papers published.

1623
V J Cook, Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex: Memory and language processes. To investigate the relationship between: primary memory and speech processes; language acquisition and memory development. Begun 1973. Some articles published: details obtainable from CILT.

1630
Dr W A Bennett, Department of French, King's College, University of London: Research towards a theory of language learning and use. To elaborate a theoretical model of 'performance'; to determine the best conditions for the learning of language, with special reference to the learning of French by university students. Begun 1972. Some articles published: details obtainable from CILT.

2010
Dr P Skehan, Birkbeck College, University of London: Memory and motivation as predictors of success in foreign language learning. To examine memory and motivation as factors in student success. Begun 1975. PhD thesis completed 1982: details obtainable from CILT.

2025
Dr C J Brumfit, University of London Institute of Education: An investigation into group work procedures in the teaching of English as a second/foreign language. Begun 1976. PhD thesis completed (1983) and books published: details obtainable from CILT.

2090
H H Arrammash, Department of Linguistics, University of Sheffield; A study of the relevance of error analysis to theories of second language acquisition. To examine the contribution of error analysis studies to these theories; to study the processes underlying second language acquisition. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1976.

2121
Dr J B Long, Ergonomics Unit, University College London (and 1 associate): Differences between first and second language performance. To ascertain the nature of differences in performance between first and second language users, particularly with regard to comprehension and memory for text. Begun 1976. Paper published: details obtainable from CILT.

2336
Dr F Moshfegi, Department of Linguistics, University of Cambridge: The critical period hypothesis for second language learning. To discover whether adults are incapable, or less capable than children, of learning the phonological systems of another language without formal instruction. Begun 1975. PhD thesis completed 1979; details obtainable from CILT.

2362
A Bell (and 3 associates), Department of Language and Literature, Polytechnic of North London: Reading in a second language (Spanish). To compare the cognitive processes involved in reading texts in first and second languages and to attempt to determine the factors causing the differences found. Thesis for a higher degree. Begun 1978.

2458
Professor M Coltheart, Department of Psychology, Birkbeck College, University of London: A computerised psycholinguistic database. To set up a database relating to the words of English, to include information about spelling, pronunciation, parts of speech, imageability, concreteness, meaningfulness, familiarity, word frequency, age of acquisition etc. Begun 1978. Article published: details obtainable from CILT.

2492
Dr P M Meara (and a team of research students), Department of Applied Linguistics, Birkbeck College, University of London: Vocabulary acquisition in a second language. A programme of projects in the area of vocabulary acquisition and word handling in a second language. Topics under investigation include: lexical avoidance; factors affecting word recognition; models of vocabulary growth; word associations; differences in word handling strategies resulting from word structure of first language; development of standard tests for vocabulary measurement. Theses for degrees of MA and PhD. Begun 1980. Some results available: details obtainable from CILT.

2526
Ms H E Borland, Department of Linguistics, University of Edinburgh: Acquisition sequences in the learning of four areas of English syntax by Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Vietnamese adolescents in Australia. To determine learning sequence and speed; influence of native language; interrelationship between four seemingly independent areas of syntax. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1979.

2528
Ms A Kary, Department of Linguistics, University of Edinburgh: Language input to native and non-native language learning children. To analyse the spontaneous language of English nursery school teachers to native English-speaking children and Egyptian children,

to study strategies for modifying linguistic interaction to accommodate variables of child listeners. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1977.

2542
Dr M R Omer, Department of Linguistics, University of Edinburgh: Recognising two different instances of reference as referring to the same individual: implications for teaching listening comprehension to non-native speakers. To compare the performance of native and non-native English speakers in understanding anaphoric nouns and pronouns. Begun 1978. PhD thesis completed 1982: details obtainable from CILT.

2543
Dr Y T Simukoko, Department of Linguistics, University of Edinburgh: A cross-sectional study of some interlanguage systems of Bantu learners of English in Lusaka primary schools, Zambia. To investigate the linguistic behaviour of learners; to correlate social and psychological factors with language development. Begun 1978. PhD thesis completed 1982: details obtainable from CILT.

2603
Miss V H Dundas-Grant (and associates), Department of Education, University of Keele: Psychological aspects of teaching/learning foreign languages with particular reference to classes in primary and secondary schools. To study the conditions of learning languages, the role of motivation, memory and the affective and cognitive aspects of foreign language learning. Begun 1980.

2665
Dr Barbara A Fennell, Department of Linguistic and International Studies, University of Surrey: Some characteristics of subordinate clause constructions in German, Swedish and English. To describe and predict problem areas for learners of these languages on the basis of a theoretical description of subordinate clause constructions. Begun 1977. PhD thesis completed 1982: details obtainable from CILT.

2696
Dr R Hawkey, University of London Institute of Education: Interrelationships between personality factors, cognitive styles and second language learning in adult learners of English for academic purposes. To study the factors, their interrelationships, and their relation to communicative effectiveness; to discuss the implications of findings for student training. Begun 1979. PhD thesis completed 1982: details obtainable from CILT.

2704
P B Early, Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex: Applications of speech act theory to the teaching of English

as a foreign or second language. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1978. Some papers published: details obtainable from CILT.

2759
J D Fox (and 2 associates), School of Modern Languages and European History, University of East Anglia: Methods of facilitating vocabulary learning. To study different approaches to vocabulary learning, including techniques of memorisation and contextualisation. Involves students of Spanish and English as a foreign language. Begun 1979. Articles published: details obtainable from CILT.

2763
B L Jones, Homerton College, Cambridge: The attitudes of 13-14-year-old pupils learning French as their first foreign language and the attitudes of their foreign language teachers to them as either 'able' or 'less able' learners. To explore the hypothesised attitudes by means of questionnaires, interviews, lesson transcriptions and analysis of published works. Thesis for degree of DPhil (University of York). Begun 1979.

2767
Dr Jung Chang, Department of Language, University of York: The applicability of some aspects of applied linguistics to English language teaching in the People's Republic of China. Begun 1980. DPhil thesis completed 1982: details obtainable from CILT.

2770
Mrs M Grover-Stripp (and 1 associate), Department of Psychology, University of Reading: Structural associations in Polish and English monoglots and in Polish/English bilinguals. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1981.

2788
Ms M H Simonot, Industrial Language Training Unit, Walsall and Ms C M Roberts, National Centre for Industrial Language Training, Southall (and 2 associates): Second language acquisition by adult immigrants. Part of a project involving France, Germany, Holland, Sweden and Britain. To investigate psychological and social factors determining success and speed of acquisition, order and rate of acquisition, everyday use of target languages. Begun 1982. Some results available: details obtainable from CILT.

2803
E J Briscoe, Department of Linguistics, University of Cambridge: Functional explanation of linguistic fact: a theory of spoken language understanding. To propose, and attempt to justify, three general principles of spoken language understanding: (a) strict left-to-right analysis (SLRA); (b) interactive determinism (ID); (c) modification of ID by the principle of default strategies (DS). Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1980.

2810
Dr M Gruneberg, Department of Psychology, University College of Swansea (University of Wales): Development of a linkword language system. Use of psychological techniques to develop a system for accelerated learning of vocabulary and basic grammar of a foreign language. Stresses role of memory and word association. Begun 1981.

2831
Dr Anne Cutler, MRC Applied Psychology Unit, Cambridge (and 3 associates): Language-specific comprehension strategies. To identify strategies which are language-specific components of the comprehension process relevant to second language learning, e.g. transfer to second language contexts in which they are not helpful. Begun 1982. Article published: details obtainable from CILT.

2925
R H Brown (and 2 associates), Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex: Error analysis: a grammatical description of the English of selected remedial students at the University of Liberia and the pedagogic implications of teaching Standard English at the tertiary level. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1983.

2928
A P Clarke (and 1 associate), Faculty of Education, University of Manchester: The communicative strategies of a group of school learners of French as a second language. To examine the strategies used by a group of 19 boys with an average age of 13 years 6 months when communicating orally in French. Thesis for degree of MEd. Begun 1983.

2948
A J P Lopes, Department of Linguistics, University College of North Wales, Bangor, (University of Wales): Some aspects of Portuguese word order and its communicative function. To investigate conventions of written text observed in English and in Mozambican-Portuguese, to identify areas of contrast which may create barriers to textual processing. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1983.

2959
Mrs A M Bain, Department of Linguistics, University of Aberdeen: The teaching of English to Chinese students. A study of errors in written and spoken English by Cantonese-speaking students of English at a college of further education in the United Kingdom. Thesis for degree of MLitt. Begun 1982.

2960
Ms H D M Oatey, Department of Linguistics, University College of North Wales, Bangor, (University of Wales): Text structure in Chinese and English and its effects on reading comprehension. Articles from Chinese and English medical journals will be analysed

for the textual features of cohesion and theme/rheme. Chinese doctors and medical students will be used to determine whether these features cause any difficulty in reading. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1982.

2966
Ms N Yildiz, Vancouver Community College: The effectiveness of a contact approach (community-oriented tasks) for communicative language teaching. To examine the effectiveness of this approach for groups of Japanese high school and university students taking a summer conversational English course in Canada. Begun 1980. PhD thesis (University of London Institute of Education) completed 1984.

2999
B C Ntahwa Kuderwa (and 3 associates), Department of Linguistics, University of Edinburgh: Some features of the interlanguage development of Zairean learners of English, with reference to the pidginisation hypothesis. A quantitative and functional analysis of data obtained from school pupils (4th-6th year secondary) and university undergraduates. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1983.

3002
R L Allwright (and associates), Department of Linguistics, University of Lancaster: The relationship between language teaching and language learning: what learners do to make sense of language lessons. To explore a variety of hypotheses about ESL/EFL classroom language learning, in an attempt to understand how learning and teaching are related. Begun 1984. Article published: details obtainable from CILT.

3005
C B Oduol (and 1 associate), Department of Modern Languages, University of Aston in Birmingham:The significance and some implications of interactant strategies in an ESL classroom context: a Kenyan case study. To identify the spoken language requirements of pupils in English, science and maths at lower primary-school level, as deducible from specific strategies adopted by classroom interactants in the face of the linguistic challenges posed by English as the language of instruction. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1983.

3007
Ms R Weinert, Department of Applied Linguistics, University of Edinburgh: The acquisition of the structures of negation and interrogation in German by children and adults with English as first language within the context of classroom foreign language learning. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1983.

3025
Ms M A Rogers (and 1 associate), Department of Linguistic and International Studies, University of Surrey: Word order in German as a

second language. To examine the development of word order rules in learners of German, paying particular attention to the different target orders of verb-second order in main clauses and verb-final order in subordinate clauses. To compare the performance of English, Dutch and possibly Turkish learners.... Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1984.

3026
Ms E Haywood, Department of Psychology, University of Reading: Language acquisition (strategies) in bilingual Polish-English children (4-6 years). To find out what strategies these children use in their acquisition of Polish language and their determining factors such as cognition, language, individual, age. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1978.

3030
Ms P Daniel, University of London Institute of Education (and 2 associates): The communicative use of visual devices in second language learning. To investigate the factors contributing to student difficulties in using visual devices (primarily non-pictorial, i.e. schematic/abstract formats) as an aid to second language learning. Thesis for degree of MPhil. Begun 1980. Completed 1984.

3038
Ms M Siudek, Department of Linguistics, University College of North Wales, Bangor, (University of Wales): A study of some factors affecting the sequence and rate of acquisition of English as a second language by adult refugees in western Pennsylvania. A sequence of acquisition study undertaken among a category of adult learners speaking a non-Indo-European first language .... Thesis for degree of MA. Begun 1984.

3042
Ms B Baldursdottir, Department of Linguistics, University of Lancaster: Language acquisition and bilingualism. A case study of an Icelandic child, who continues his first language acquisition under conditions of limited exposure at the same time as he acquires his second language. Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1982.

3047
Mrs F Bensemmane, Department of Linguistics, University College of North Wales, Bangor (University of Wales): Lexical cohesion, coherence and the determination of text intelligibility in foreign learners of English. An investigation of the extent to which relationships of cohesion affect the comprehension of readers in a foreign language. A cross-sectional study of first-, second- and third-year university students of diverse linguistic backgrounds .... Thesis for degree of PhD. Begun 1982.

PART II: RESEARCH DEGREES COMPLETED 1980-83

This is a list of completed projects in the field of second language learning which do not appear in Part I (above) because they did not come to the notice of CILT while the work was still in progress, and were not included in the register of current research.

This list been prepared from several sources:
- Aslib Index to theses (annual)
- other registers and lists of work in progress in particular subject areas
- correspondents in a number of university departments who responded to a special request for information; the Centre is grateful for their assistance.

Inclusion of research in this list is necessarily somewhat arbitrary; coverage is not restricted to a precisely defined field, and is inevitably patchy.

1980

Amer, A
A comparative study of English and Egyptian word associations and their implications for the teaching of English to Egyptian learners. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London.

Adamopoulos-Barbour, A
An exploratory study of factors predicting success in the learning of a second language in a secondary school setting. Unpublished MSc thesis, University of Stirling.

1981

Johnson, R K
Second language learning and the language system: a principled approach in applied linguistics to facilitating the internalisation of a grammatical system. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Essex.

White, G
Linguistic input and the adult language learner. Unpublished MA thesis, University of London Institute of Education.

Al-Shamma, G
Native language acquisition and second language learning. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Sheffield.

1982

Ellis, R
Discourse processes in classroom second language development. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London.

Mgbo-Elue, Mrs C N
Ethnic stereotypes and attitudinal constraints on the learning of a second Nigerian language: a case study of Yoruba and Igbo. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Essex.

Papaefthymiou-Lytra, Ms S
Communicating and learning strategies in English as a foreign language with particular reference to the Greek learner of English. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London.

Virgilio, Ms C M
The use of discourse knowledge in reading and learning English as a foreign language (with special reference to English for special purposes). Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London.

Najjar-Bashi, H
Common errors of Iranian students in their use of the English passive construction. Unpublished MPhil thesis, University of Surrey.

Cramp, A D
Encouraging adult foreign language acquisition: a schematic and procedural approach. Unpublished MA thesis, University of London Institute of Education.

1983

Claydon, I R
Teacher/pupil interaction and pupil progress: a small-scale comparative study of special language units and normal classrooms. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Essex.

Doushaq, M H
A case study: the teaching of English in Jordan. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Essex.

Street, Ms C M
An investigation into different theories of communicative competence with special reference to ESP syllabus design. Unpublished MPhil thesis, University of London.

Abdul-Hadi, A M
The acquisition of vocabulary of English as a second language by Arabic-speaking children. Unpublished MA thesis, University College of North Wales, Bangor (University of Wales).

Myers, N
Developmental bilingualism. Unpublished MA thesis, University College of North Wales, Bangor (University of Wales).

1984

Villeneuve, M
A longitudinal and cross-sectional study of English reading ability in forms 1-3 in Swaziland with special reference to academic performance and the readability of textbooks. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London.

Appendix II

Bibliography

Jean Price

References are provided here to recent publications that review or survey second language research (though not to bibliographies or research registers, or to individual projects), to discussions of research needs, and to books and articles on second language research methodology, and some related matters. The bibliography was prepared for the conference; a few titles have been added since then.

Jean Price is Librarian of the CILT Language Teaching Library.

BOOKS

ALATIS, J, H Altman and P Alatis, eds (1981). The second language classroom: directions for the 1980s. New York: Oxford University Press.

ALLEN, J P B and Alan Davies, eds (1977). The Edinburgh course in applied linguistics. Vol 4: Testing and experimental methods. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
The purpose of the book is to present a selection of statistical procedures useful to students of applied linguistics.

ANDERSEN, R W, ed (1983). Pidginization and creolization as language acquisition. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.
Brings together the most important research in the field in the last decade. (First volume in the 'Cross-linguistic Series on Second Language Research'.)

ANSHEN, F (1978). Statistics for linguists. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.
Short, readable introduction. Many examples and references from current linguistics.

BRITISH EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (1982?). BERA Working Party on research careers (report). (Sec. Dr M Shayer). BERA. (Duplicated typescript).

BRUMFIT, C J (1984). Communicative methodology in language teaching: the roles of fluency and accuracy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
A discussion of what constitutes appropriate research in teaching methodology, followed by an examination of the theory and practice of language teaching.

BUTLER, C S (to be published 1985). Statistics in linguistics. Oxford: Blackwell.
Introduces the statistical techniques of most value to students and researchers in linguistics and language study. Includes exercises and model answers. Companion volume to BUTLER below.

BUTLER, C S (to be published 1985). Computers in linguistics. Oxford: Blackwell.
Introduction to computational methods used in theoretical and applied linguistics.

DAVIES, Alan, ed (1977). Language and learning in early childhood. London: Heinemann in association with SSRC and SCRE.
Part 2: Research on language and learning: some suggestio[illegible]r the future. By G Wells, A Bridges, L Ferrier and C Sinha, 1975.
Part 3: Research on spoken language in the primary school: [illegible]ort to Scottish Education Department, by C Criper and A Davies.

DOOLEY, P A and others (1981). Survey of educational r[illegible]rchers in Britain. Birmingham: Department of Educational Enquiry, University of Aston in Birmingham. (Aston Educational Enquiry Occasional Paper 4.)

EGGLESTON, J and S Delamont (1983). Supervision of students for research degrees, with special reference to 'Educational Studies'. London: British Educational Research Association.
Papers from a conference/workshop held at Fanhams Hall, Ware, in May 1981. Sponsored by BERA.

EUROPEAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION (1981). Field manual. Strasbourg: ESF.
Produced for the ESF project on Second Language Acquisition by Adult Immigrants. The project is supported by Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. (To be published 1985 by Newbury House, Rowley, Mass. Editor: C Perdue.)

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Description of a project with a special view to the teaching and learning of English in Denmark, carried out from 1976-81. (PIF = Projekt i fremmedsprogspaedagogik.)

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Appendix III

Conference participants

Professor Dennis Ager, Department of Modern Languages, University of Aston in Birmingham
Dick Allwright, Department of Linguistics, University of Lancaster
Dr Ellen Gurman Bard, Department of Linguistics, University of Edinburgh
Miss Vivienne Blackburn, HMI, Department of Education and Science
Miss Sheila Browne, Newnham College, Cambridge
Dr Christopher Brumfit, ESOL Department, University of London Institute of Education (now Professor in the Department of Education, University of Southampton)
Dr Clare Burstall, National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales
Brian Cheetham, National Centre for Industrial Language Training
Professor Christopher Cobb, Department of Arts and Languages, Kingston Polytechnic
Vivian Cook, Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex
Dr Alan Davies, Department of Linguistics, University of Edinburgh
Mrs Sarah Death, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research
Peter Dickson, National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales
Dr Roy Dunning, School of Education, University of Leicester
Dr Owen Egan, Educational Research Centre, St Patrick's College, Dublin (now at Linguistics Institute of Ireland)
Anthony Giovanazzi, HMI, Scottish Education Department
Derek Green, Language Centre, University of Newcastle upon Tyne
David Hargreaves, Continuing Education, BBC Television
Arthur Hughes, University of Reading
Richard Johnstone, Department of Education, University of Stirling
Dr Verity Saifullah Khan, Thomas Coram Research Unit, University of London Institute of Education
Professor Robert Le Page, Department of Language, University of York
William Littlewood, Department of Education, University College of Swansea
Dr John Long, Ergonomics Unit, University College London
Miss Helen Lunt, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research
Steven McDonough, Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex
Ms Isobel McGregor, Strathclyde Region Education Authority, Dunbarton Division

Dr Paul Meara, Department of Applied Linguistics, Birkbeck College, University of London

Ms Rosamond Mitchell, Department of Education, University of Stirling (now in Department of Linguistics, University of Edinburgh)

Alan Moys, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research)

Sam Muir, Oxfordshire Education Authority

Brian Page, Central Language Laboratory, University of Leeds

Euan Reid, Community Languages and Education Project, University of London Institute of Education (now in ESOL Department)

Ms Margaret Simonot, Walsall Industrial Language Training Unit

Dr Peter Skehan, ESOL Department, University of London Institute of Education

Professor Neil Smith, Department of Phonetics and Linguistics, University College London, and Education and Human Development Committee of the Economic and Social Research CVouncil

John Stoddart, English Language Services, British Council

Professor Samuel Taylor, Department of French, University of St Andrews, and National Council for Modern Languages in Higher and Further Education

John Trim, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research

Professor Henry Widdowson, ESOL Department, University of London Institute of Education

David Wilkins, Department of Linguistic Science, University of Reading

Dr Patricia Wright, MRC Applied Psychology Unit, Cambridge

Mrs Rita Wright, Joint Council of Language Associations

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116